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**A Textual and Contextual Study of English
Language and Literature Essays: The Case of
First Year English Department Students' Writing
in Dhaka University, Bangladesh**

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Applied Linguistics and English Language
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Abbreviations

General Abbreviations

FC-2	Foundation Course 2
FL	Foreign Language
HSC	Higher Secondary School Certificate
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
SSC	Secondary School Certificate
TWE	Test of Written English
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language

Abbreviations in Chapter 2

CARS	Create a research space
RA	Research article

Abbreviations in Chapter 3, 7 & 8

RQ	Research Question
PIQ	Pre-interview Questionnaire
S1	Student 1
S1fu	Student 1 follow-up
T1	Teacher 1

Abbreviations in Chapter 5 & 6

HGE	High grade essays
LGE	Low grade essays

Abbreviations for ‘Exposition-Discussion’ model

O	Opener
G	Gambit
BI	Background Information
D	Definition
GS	General Statement
NTP	Narrowing towards Proposition
P	Proposition
ST	Stating Thesis

SC	Stating Claim
EP	Elaborating Proposition
PD	Plan of Development
SP	Supporting Proposition
ESP	Elaborating Supporting Proposition
Ev	Giving Evidence
Ex	Giving Explanation
EvEx	Giving Evidence and Explanation
RP	Restating Proposition
CI	Consolidation of ideas
CP	Confirming Proposition
ECP	Elaborating Confirmed Proposition
BP	Beyond Proposition
PR	Personal Response
MS	Making Suggestions
MP	Making Predictions
WP	Widening Proposition

Abbreviations for ‘Description-Recount’ model

O	Opener
BI	Background Information
GS	Making General Statements
P	Proposition
PR	Personal Response/comment
D	Defining
ME/MI	Narrating main event/describing main issue
EP	Elaborating Proposition
PD	Plan of Development
E/D	Series of events/descriptions
PR	Personal Response/comment
RP	Restating Proposition
PR	Personal Response/comment
MS	Making suggestions

Abbreviations in Chapter 8

BICS	Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills
CALP	Cognitive Academic Language Programme

Abbreviations in Chapter 9

ESAP	English for Specific Academic Purposes
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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is entirely my original work, except where due acknowledgement is made. It has not been previously submitted for any higher degree or qualification in another university.

Signed: 
(Nevin Farida)

Abstract

This research examines English language and literature essays written by First Year students of the English Department at Dhaka University (Bangladesh) using multi-method genre analysis. The first method used was text analysis. Essay topics were analysed from the two contexts to identify their topic fields and main rhetorical functions. This helped develop the two models to analyse the structure of essays: an Exposition-Discussion model and a Description-Recount model. Then, a total of 100 essays from the two contexts were analysed on the basis of Move-strategy structure to see what structural patterns the essays possessed, what tactical choices the students took to express the moves and what was presented in terms of content matter within those moves. The second method was a questionnaire that was distributed to students in the department to discover their perceptions of the writing tasks given. And the third method was interviews conducted with teachers and students of the department to find out about their perceptions of student writing. This, then, is a genre-based study which draws both on written data and on interaction with community members.

The multi-method approach to genre analysis revealed that students of the English Department write three different kinds of essays, Description-Recount language essays, Exposition-Discussion language essays and Exposition-Discussion literature essays. The study further revealed that although students wrote these different kinds of essays, they were unable to make connections between their language essay writing tasks and literature ones because of the disciplinary variations. Moreover, the literature essays were found to be much more challenging to write than the language ones. In the light of this, the need for a fourth type of essay writing is identified.

This research contributes to the fields of applied linguistics and education in several ways. Firstly, the models developed not only give insights into the generic structure of the essays students write in the English Department at Dhaka University, but they could also function as a starting point for other researchers working with similar texts. Secondly, the analyses of the high and low grade essays explain how some features of writing are more highly valued than others in this context. Thirdly, the study has pedagogical implications that can benefit students and teachers who would use genre-based approach to teaching language and literature essay writing. Fourthly, this research demonstrates a multi-method approach to genre analysis which brings out complementary and sometimes contradictory perspectives on the same written products. Fifthly, it can help university planners and policy makers to consider the relationship between main discipline courses and support courses and minimise any gaps. Finally, it can raise awareness among the global applied linguistics community about the kind of student writing produced in contexts such as the English Department of Dhaka University.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND CONTEXT

1.0 Introduction

Writing demands an enormous amount of specialised knowledge which cannot simply be acquired from formal instruction of arbitrary rules of the mechanics of writing, definitions, drill, or textbook exercises. Even the most ordinary kinds of written texts involve a vast number of conventions as well as tacit knowledge and creativity that cannot be totally incorporated into any formal instruction programme. Subtle matters such as style, intricate registers that depend upon the topic of discussion and the readership, schemas appropriate to the particular medium being employed, patterning of the genre will vary depending upon the specific purpose of the written piece. Because of these specific requirements, writers will have to produce effective texts that would be genre specific, culturally appropriate, linguistically accurate and generically correct.

Writing at university becomes more complex because of its nature of being discipline specific. Individual disciplinary context or community requires different approaches and expectations and students belonging to these communities are expected to be aware of these requirements. This becomes doubly intimidating when EFL students enter from an L1 background to a completely L2 context, as in the case of students getting admitted in the First year of their undergraduate studies in the Department of English, University of Dhaka. Students here are expected to pursue all the challenging study skills and pass on that information and ideas in writing using appropriate style, rhetorical structure,

linguistic features and so on in L2. These assumptions of what students know and what teachers expect often result in complicating matters leading to academics' dissatisfaction about the unsatisfactory performance of students. I felt it necessary to look at students' written products and get a clear picture of what they were expected to produce and what they actually did and why they did so within their given context.

The study as a whole, thus, aims to explore the kinds of essays students in the First year write for their language and literature courses, and investigate some of the ways in which they are similar and different.

This chapter provides the background information relating to the role of English and English education in Bangladesh followed by an overview of the motivations, aims, methodology and significance of the study.

1.1 English, ELT and Bangladesh

Bangladesh is a monolingual country with Bengali (L1) as the official language and being spoken by almost 95% of the population. It is used in almost every sector of life, from social interaction to public offices and educational institutions (primary, secondary and higher secondary¹). However, due to the fast growing status of English as a global and international language combined with the past colonial exercise of the British power, it is often given priority over Bengali within the higher academic environment and more prestigious working places. University education in Bangladesh relies heavily

¹ English in these levels is taught as a compulsory second language subject

on students' proficiency in English. In addition to that, it requires the appropriate study skills including critical and analytical thinking. It is assumed that by the time students begin their tertiary studies after studying English as a compulsory subject in primary, secondary and higher secondary schools they have a reasonably good standard of English language proficiency. However, this is not the actual scenario.

In order to get a clear picture of what the status of English is in Bangladesh, we need to look back 250 years ago when the language was introduced into the subcontinent.

1.1.1 English in colonial period

English historically has been with us for the last 250 years. The introduction of English in the Indian subcontinent by the British (1757-1947) began in Bengal, the part of India which first went under the British colonial rule through the East India Company (EIC) in 1757, in order to improve trade relations between the two linguistically different communities (Rahman 1999). Besides its (EIC) mission to convert natives into Christians, it also aimed at providing English education to the natives that they believed would 'civilise' the native population (Eagleton 2000). Lord Macaulay's *Minutes* introduced the Education Act in 1835 where teaching of English literature was made official. English teaching at that time was a teaching of English literature. It was believed that English literature would enable learners to learn the target language and culture which would 'humanise' the native population. The Imperialists were actually "maintaining control of the natives under the guise of a liberal education" (Viswanathan

1987:17). This was ‘cultural invasion’ according to Freire’s (1993) ‘antidialogical action’ where there is a one way game played by the oppressors on the oppressed.

The introduction of English into the Indian subcontinent led to several changes in the economic, social, political and cultural life of the region. Firstly, English became the official language of communication between different regions using different mother tongues. Secondly, it was adopted as the medium of instruction in all levels of education. Thirdly, modern scientific and technological knowledge was acquired and communicated with the rest of the world with this language. Finally, if one was to excel in jobs or get entry into the prestigious workplaces, one had to sit for the highly competitive ICS (Indian Civil Service) examination and that was available to only those who had a strong grounding in the language (Haque 1989).

With the departure of the Imperialists in 1947, there began another phase in the history of the Bengali² people and their relationship with English.

1.1.2 English in post-colonial Pakistani period

1947 witnessed the creation of Pakistan and India. Pakistan then consisted of two wings: West Pakistan and East Pakistan (Bangladesh today) separated by 1500 miles of Indian territory. The people of East and West Pakistan were different in every possible way, except religion. Islam was the only common factor between the two wings. Although 60% of the total population of united Pakistan lived in East Pakistan, with 56.40%

² Bengali refers to both the nationality and the official language of Bangladesh

speaking Bengali/*Bangla* and a meager 3.27% speaking Urdu (1951 census), political power was largely concentrated in West Pakistan. On 21st March 1948 Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the Governor General of Pakistan, addressed a huge gathering in Dhaka, capital of Bangladesh and stated that the official/second language of Pakistan would be English and that the state language would be 'Urdu and Urdu alone'.

This language policy was resented by the East Pakistanis which led to a lot of bloodshed in 1952. After this the government was forced to accept Bengali as the official language alongside Urdu. English was made an optional medium of instruction with English as a subject being taught as compulsory at educational institutions.

The language issue became one of the major causes of the separation between East and West Pakistan.

1.1.3 English in the independent Bangladesh period

After a nine month liberation war East Pakistanis won their Independence in 1971 and Bengali was declared the sole state language in the Constitution of 1972. This strong nationalistic sentiment for the mother tongue eliminated not only Urdu but also English and this led to a setback of the English language (Rahman 1999, Zaman 2004). Almost everything, from street signs to documents in offices, was replaced by Bengali. In 1972, the Government of Bangladesh adopted Bengali as the medium of instruction at all levels because it symbolised a nation's dignity, fostered national pride and removed

class distinctions. It also emphasised that students would be taking on undue pressure in trying to learn a foreign language.

In 1974, the national language policy of Bangladesh based on the *Bangladesh Education Commission Report* better known as the *Qudrat-e-Khuda Report* recommended that Bengali be made the medium of instruction at all levels, but “for historical reasons and for the sake of reality” English would still be used “as a compulsory second language” (p.14). After this English was again included as a compulsory subject of study in the curriculum of primary, secondary and higher secondary levels alongside other subjects taught in Bengali. The Bangla Introduction Act of 1987 (Act Number 2 of 1987, Article 3 of the Constitution) declared that *Bangla* must be used everywhere for all correspondences, government, semi-government, autonomous organizations and law courts, except in the case of foreign relations. Until the mid 1980s English was a compulsory subject for the Bachelor of Arts (Pass) degree programme (Years 13 and 14)³ but was dropped from the BA (Pass) degree syllabus in order to increase the pass percentage. After two and a half decades from the 1996/97 academic session, the government of Bangladesh re-introduced English as a compulsory subject at the tertiary level. In 2001, the government again decided to declare English as a second language (Zaman 2003, 2004) most probably due to the recent upsurge of privatisation and globalisation in every sector. However, it is still very much an urban-based elitist language with no real implementation taking place of its declared status in all spheres. With all these inconsistencies in the existence and status of English language in

³ Students are required to study two years for a general Bachelor (Pass) degree, whereas for a Bachelor (Honours) degree they are required to undertake study for four years

Bangladesh, sometimes encouraging it and at other times limiting it the standard of English education and students' language proficiency level declined over the years (Quader 1998, Imam 2005, Hossain and Tollefson 2006). The status of English with its volatile language policies has led it to be an issue of debate. To my understanding, it neither has a fully ESL status, nor an EFL one, rather it is dangling in a limbo between the two. Henceforth, I will refer to the status of English in Bangladesh as EFL/ESL status.

1.1.3.1 English at pre-university levels at present

English is taught as a compulsory second language subject. Changing government policies brought changes in teaching materials and methods as well. 1990s saw the entry of Communicative Language Teaching methods in the classroom and the introduction of "a set of supposedly communicative English textbooks entitled *English for Today*" (Siddique 2004:16). Such a communicative syllabus was introduced on the recommendation by British ELT experts⁴ recruited to rectify the effects created by the marginalisation of English in the post independence period. Keeping in alliance with Short and Candlin's (1986) views that literary texts are inaccessible to NNS, these experts advised replacing literary texts with non-literary texts. In the secondary and higher secondary levels, the national curriculum textbook board (NCTB) from 1995 recommended only one English book, *English for Today*, which has numerous units of skill based comprehension work based on short non-fiction passages and almost nothing

⁴ Consultants of English Language Teaching Improvement Project (ELTIP), a joint venture of the Government of Bangladesh and the British Government's Department of International Development (DFID)

on literature. My experience suggests that a mere one or two literary texts that are there in the whole book are considered unimportant and not done in class. Recently, this book has been supplemented with one grammar book. The aim of introducing *English for Today* was to teach English as a language of communication, not as a subject of knowledge. This transition took place with the purpose of helping students express themselves using the L2. Unfortunately, however, the objective failed to serve its purpose which was evident from the proficiency of the students entering universities in the consecutive years. A strong criticism of the book is made by Alam (2002) where he comments that the “synthetic” tailor made passages are “flat and soporific” (p.133) and could be replaced by similar topics drawn from authentic literary texts produced locally or from neighbouring regions with similar cultural backgrounds.

Studies (Alam 2002, Hasan 2004, Siddiqui 2004, Sinha 2005-06, Ahmad 2005-06, Hamid 2006) have revealed numerous practical problems in connection with CLT and *English for Today* for the Bangladeshi classroom. Although the curriculum expects students to use all the language skills in learning English and transferring those skills in real life situations, in reality that is hardly what is practiced. There are cases where students do not even use that single core book, and simply practice the solved exercises available in low quality guide books. In order to write a 200 word composition, students use the age old system of rote learning. They memorise 20-30 essays and paragraphs on the basis of 'suggestions' given by their teachers, who are in most cases their personal tutors, and regurgitate that in the examination. They feel that they will have a fair chance of getting some common topics. Instead of trying to learn to write on their own,

they depend on their rote learning skills to simply pass examinations without realising its significance in real life or for higher education. Most of the students lack the knowledge of the strategies and skills they should apply for reading or writing a paragraph or any piece of text. Alam (2005) contends that relegating literary texts from the Intermediate syllabus has brought a setback in students' ability to think critically, interpret and deconstruct texts, be aware of the importance of form and structure, gain insights into the importance of perspective and context, and get sensitised to reader responses.

Apart from the *Bangla* medium schools, there are also some private English medium schools that enjoy an elite status and do not follow the national curriculum. They have their own syllabus, use textbooks mainly produced in the UK and India. These students sit for O and A level examinations administered by the British Council and eventually go abroad to continue their studies.

1.1.3.2 English education at university level

It is observed that most of the students in the public universities come from Bengali medium education background who have fewer opportunities (only 40 minutes x 5 days of English class) to read and write English. With English being recommended for all tertiary level study purposes, including class lectures, and as 90% of the books required for higher education are in English, problems are bound to arise (Choudhury 2001). However, we must keep the fact in mind that English is recommended only on an informal level in public universities. On an official level, there is the option of taking

classes in L1 and students giving their examinations in L1 too, and as a result the situation is more or less bilingual. This of course depends on the disciplines students belong to and availability of texts and reference books in L1. It is mostly in the humanities (excluding the English Department) and few social science departments where the use of L1 is noticeable. Most students at the beginning fail to realise that at the university they are required to acquire subject matter knowledge through meaningful 'discovery learning' instead of indulging in unnecessary 'reception learning' or rote learning (Ausubel 1980: 16). Students think that as they were able to get away with their memorisation skills in the lower levels, they will be able to apply the same methods at the tertiary level and be successful. In addition to this, students commit plagiarism because they are unaware of the necessity of providing a precise reference to the sources of their information.

Realising this complex situation and for the purposes of allowing students to overcome their language problems and to reach the target level of English language proficiency, public universities⁵ in Bangladesh have been encouraging faculties to introduce compulsory English language courses for the first year students of different Departments (Dutta 2001). It is true that not all departments need English, but there are subject areas that rely heavily on good English language competence, and if students seriously intend to do well they need to read and consult books and journals mainly written in English. But as students are weak in English they find themselves in an almost helpless situation unable to make ends meet. Hence, the reason for such inclusion of English language

⁵ Private universities have their own language policies which vary from public universities. For them English is the medium of instruction

courses is obviously because different departments, irrespective of their different disciplines, feel that English is immensely beneficial and necessary for the students undertaking higher studies; it is an asset rather than a liability. However, it is observed that these courses tend to be simply remedial and general in nature focusing mainly on the teaching of the four skills with a special emphasis given to deductive grammar teaching. The departments fail to recognise the students' specific needs as well as the institutional needs and thereby fail to make their language programmes successful or enhance students' linguistic competence (Ahmed et al. 2004).

1.2 English teaching-learning in the English Department of Dhaka University

When Dhaka University was established in 1921, the English Department had only English literature in its curriculum which was in accordance with Macaulay's 1835 *Minutes*. The teaching of English literature meant the teaching of English language and culture through a mode of information transfer or the system of 'deposit making' from Freire's (1993) 'banking concept' of education. This approach presupposes that students already have a good command of English. But with all the changes in the educational policies after Independence, the student community was affected greatly, most particularly the advanced level students as they are the ones who need to communicate in English at the universities (Tasmin 2001).

Following the objective of trying to bridge the gap between students' present L2 proficiency and target L2 proficiency, the Arts Faculty introduced an English Language

course (Foundation Course 2)⁶ for all freshmen (approximately 1300 students) across the Faculty in 1998, taught by teachers of the English Department using one core textbook, *Advancing Language Skills*. The aim of the FC-2 course was to allow students learn to communicate effectively in both spoken and written English. Khan (2000:80) in her evaluation of the course reports:

The aim of the current FC 2 course is to address the issue of how effectively students may learn to communicate both written and spoken English. It strives to be different from the typically traditional English course where syllabus contents and methodology adopt grammar and a teacher-centred approach. Theoretically, the FC 2 course aims to focus on all the four skills in addition to grammar. The implementation of the FC 2 course represents an innovation in foreign language learning as there has been an attempt to change syllabus content, textbook materials, and classroom methodology in tune with current principles of communicative language learning (CLT).

Although several studies on the FC2 course have shown (Khan 2000, Hamid 2000, Siddiqui 2002, Sarwar 2003) that teachers and students in general approved of this course, there were several areas, like syllabus content, textbook, teachers, examination and assessment, that were identified as clearly requiring more attention. There were grave concerns from the English department teachers (Alam 2002, 2005; Hamid 1999, 2000, 2006; Siddiqui 2002; Sarwar 2003; Farida 2004) about the applicability of the course and teaching materials for the English department students as they were mainly responsible for teaching the course. As a result, they recommended the implementation of Content-based language teaching (CBLT) in lieu of basic communicative courses because what students in the English Department need is EAP within the ESP field designed to meet students' needs in the target situation. The students in this context have

⁶ FC2 (Foundation Course 2) was the English language parallel course with FC1 (Foundation Course 1 in *Bangla*) were full credit courses introduced in 1998 for all freshmen in the faculty of Arts.

dual target needs, a need to learn about the content and a need to learn how to use language to express thoughts and ideas about that content. In addition to these problems, shortage of teaching staff, absence of a central body, lack of cooperation and coordination amongst all the departments ultimately led to the administrative decision for scrapping the FC courses (both FC1 and FC2) in 2006 as common courses run across the Faculty of Arts. It was, however, decided that departments could still run the English language course if they thought it to be necessary but the responsibility of conducting the course should be taken by the respective departments.

Consequently, from the batch of 2006-2007, English Department students are doing the language course as English 101 (hence, FC2 is at present called Eng 101), a full credit course along with other four half-credit core courses. Although it was realised that the English language course for the English Department needed to be more cognitively challenging and include content based teaching materials, the irony is that the same course book, *Advancing Language Skills*, which seemed so inadequate for specific needs of the students is still being used with the hope that the lessons will be redesigned and updated to cater for ESP needs of the English Department students. It needs mentioning that the data (essays) for this research were collected from both FC2 and Eng 101 contexts (see Chapter 3 and 6). The change did not create any problems for my data collection as there was no change in the syllabus, question papers nor the assessment.

At present, the Bachelor of Art (Honours) programme in English at Dhaka University is a four-year course offered by the English Department under the Faculty of Arts with

courses both in English literature and Linguistics. In the First year, students are required to take one (100 mark) full credit general English language course, Eng 101, and four half unit (50 marks) literature courses: Eng 102 (Critical Appreciation, Rhetoric and Prosody); Eng 103 (Introduction to Poetry); Eng 104 (Introduction to Prose); Eng 105 (Introduction to Drama). The latter four courses are purely devoted to literature because curriculum developers felt that students in the English Department must be exposed to literature in all its “variety and modes” like acquiring “descriptive and analytical skills” to master a range of literary concepts like irony, point of view, realism etc. (Alam 2001: 3). It has been observed that most of the students entering the English Department in the First year come with the Bengali medium instruction background based in rural and small towns (with only one or two students coming from English medium schools among the 155 freshmen) and are “linguistically underprepared and conceptually unequipped” to work with the high demands of the pure literature courses because most of these students have never read any English literature in their secondary or higher secondary schools (Dutta 2001: 125).

A comparison of the scores attained by the students in each course reveal the differences in their performance in the written examinations at the end of their First year. It is evident from the FC2 marks (see Figure 1)⁷ of three years that students find it easier to tackle the language course in comparison to the literature courses.

⁷ The course numbers at present have changed for all the courses with the naming of Foundation course 2 as Eng 101

Year/Courses	FC-2 (avg.marks)	E-101 (avg.marks)	E-102 (avg.marks)	E-103 (avg.marks)	E-104 (avg.marks)
2003	61	46	49	45	49
2004	58	40	45	49	46
2005	58	49	48	47	48

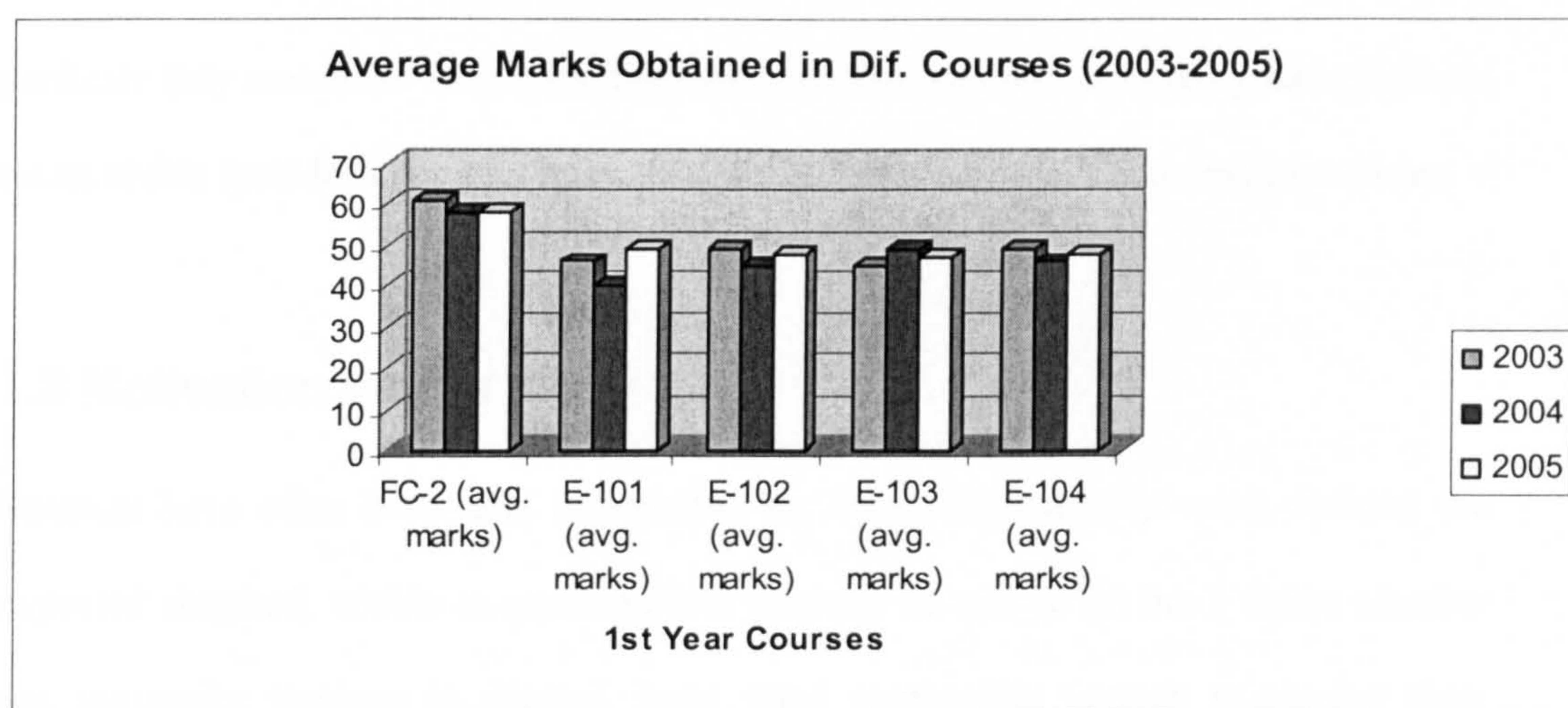


Figure 1: Average marks attained by students of the First year in their different courses

As our evaluation system is based primarily on students' written performance under timed conditions, a lot of emphasis is laid by both teachers and students on writing ability. However, it is ironical that although writing is considered so important for students' academic development, serious attention has not been given to the teaching and learning of different writing genres in the classroom, not even paragraphs and essays (as is clearly revealed in Chapters 7 and 8 from student and teacher perceptions). Sinha's study (1998) on English achievement tests shows that the evaluating system at pre-university levels encourages students to memorise essays and paragraphs instead of developing their writing abilities and trying to write on their own. In addition to that, Sinha (1998) also mentions that the topics and questions set for the examinations are

repetitive and, therefore, predictable. Students can confidently memorise those few answers or essays and achieve very high scores. This may seem to work well at pre-university levels but at the university students soon realise they cannot rely solely on rote memorisation and must start writing on their own. They find out that no matter how perfectly they memorise their lines, they are not attaining their expected grades, because tutors at this level look for a lot more than just accurate sentences and repetitive ideas.

1.3 Motivation for the study

Students have often been held responsible for being linguistically weak, lacking the expected standard, unable to communicate properly so and so on but I doubt whether we, university teachers in general, have acted responsibly enough to resolve their problems. I was, thus, primarily motivated to undertake this study from a long term interest in helping First year students of my department. I saw, being a teacher of the department for thirteen years, how students at this stage suffered most acutely with English language related problems in comparison to any other years. Several studies based on L1 contexts (Lea and Street 1998, Clerehan 2003, Ballinger 2003, Smith 2004, Green 2006, Atherton 2006) have reported and discussed issues on how students in the First year go through tremendous agony in adapting and handling their university study and practices of the institutions. This gets more intimidating especially if they are ESL/EFL students in a completely L2 situation. These difficulties combined with linguistic incompetence make things more complicated and problematic for freshmen.

Secondly, while taking classes, students often suggested that if more concentration was given to writing skills in the First year they could have improved their writing and performed better in their examinations. As a result, I felt that by looking at First year students' writing I could bring more insights into writing problems and identify avenues to improve their writing ability. I can never forget a plea that a First year student once made in class when he came to know that I was planning to do research on First year students' writing: "Can you please 'invent' something so that we can write English better?"

Thirdly, the other reason that motivated me to conduct my present study is that writing is still considered the major means of assessing students' knowledge. Even now, Bangladesh follows the traditional exam oriented evaluation system. Students too feel that they should be able to master the skill of writing to do well in their examinations. Oral examinations also play a part in judging students' ability but only to a very limited percentage.

Fourthly, I felt that what was being offered in the First Year as a support course (Foundation Course 2, now English 101) to improve students' English language ability did not help students' specific needs, especially, in preparing to write for the mainstream English literature courses. I personally feel the writing that students do for the language course in the First Year is far too removed from the written work that students are required to do for the literature courses. I believe students experience a lot of anxiety and pressure due to the disciplinary variations, and also when they encounter the process

of moving back and forth from one class to another having to write differently for two different classroom contexts.

Finally, amongst all the written tasks the most weighting in the examinations and in the evaluation process is given to the writing of essays or the long answers and, hence receives most attention from students. In the First year final examination of the English Language paper, a 350 word essay carries 20% of the total examination marks. In the Literature courses students are required to write both long and short essay⁸ type answers; three short essay type answers carry 42% mark and one long essay type answer carries 20% mark of the whole evaluation (that is, 62% of the whole paper is allotted to the essays). These are the main reasons why I chose to study the 'essay' and conduct my research on the different types of essays, the language essays for the English language class and the literature essays for the mainstream literature classes and tutorial classes⁹, that were written by the students. I will refer to the literature comparative questions and short questions as long essays and short essays only in Chapter 4 and simply as 'essays' in the rest of the study.

Hence, this study looks at the different essays that First year students of the English Department write for their Language and Literature courses.

⁸ Long essay type questions are referred to the Comparative questions where students are required to compare different texts or issues from two different texts/authors and carry more marks. Short essays are also essay type answers (not short notes), but the focus is on a single text. Compared to the Comparative questions these are shorter and carry lesser marks. More discussion in Chapter 4.

⁹ Tutorial classes are small group discussion classes of around 6-8 students where teachers and students discuss a text taught in the core classes once a week, followed by a written exam or presentation the following week; the scripts/presentations are marked by the concerned tutorial teacher which are added in the final exams

1.4 Aims of the study

From the above discussion it is understood that the broad aim of the study is to investigate First year undergraduate essays that students are required to write, and explore and understand the relationship between the essays written in the general English language class and the English literature classes in the English Department of Dhaka University in Bangladesh, so that this knowledge can be applied to help students improve their quality of essay writing, particularly the literature essays which they find extremely daunting.

The more specific aims are:

- 1) To investigate the essay topics of the English language course and the English literature courses that students are given in the First year.
- 2) To explore how the essays in the two contexts are similar and/or dissimilar in terms of their genre and moves.
- 3) To find out about students' and teachers' perceptions about English language and literature essays.
- 4) To identify what are students' espoused values about writing and what they say they write.
- 5) To identify what are teachers' espoused values about students' writing of essays in the two contexts and what their claims are about assessing the work.
- 6) To find out to what extent the essays required in the language classes constitute effective support for the mainstream English literature classes.

1.5 Methodology

This qualitative study adopts a number of research instruments to collect data. To look into the students' texts it follows the tradition of Swalesian Move analysis in addition to adopting some approaches from the New Rhetoric and Systemic Functional Linguistics schools (Chapter 3 for detailed description).

The focus of this study is, therefore, text analysis and the written texts are the language and literature essays collected from students of the First year. The text analysis has been corroborated by information gathered from interviews and pre-interview questionnaires from mainly First year students and teachers of the English Department of Dhaka University. A few Second and Third year students were also interviewed to find out what they had experienced in their First year and how things were different now.

1.6 Significance of the study

The written products and the research with the informants will allow me 1) to see what the students are doing in the two contexts, 2) to look at how that is strongly bound with the social community in which the students belong and 3) eventually understand why certain things get shaped (patterned) the way they do. A clear understanding of the situation might eventually lead to making changes, if required, in order to improve the writing situation in future and also lead others to conduct further research in areas that my study could not accomplish.

This study is, therefore, an attempt towards raising language awareness and making a contribution towards:

- 1) my own context in terms of improving the teaching-learning environment and development of undergraduate student's essay writing and,
- 2) the global academic community in terms of genre analysis on students' writing.

1.7 Organisation of the study

This study consists of nine chapters.

Chapter 1 sets out to give an introduction into the historical background of English education in Bangladesh, the motivation, aims, methodology and significance of the study.

Chapter 2 is a general review of literature relevant to the study. It gives an overview of what is academic writing and how discipline specific academic writing is context bound. It also discusses the producers of academic writing. Then, the essay produced by the students in different contexts is discussed along with a rationale for the essay to be considered as genre. Specific literature reviews of particular areas concerned with model development and data analyses are provided in Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8.

Chapter 3 presents an overview of the research methodology used in the study. It discusses the research tradition within which the study is situated. The different data

collection tools, time frame, participants and approach to analysis are also described. Detailed methodological issues regarding the different analyses are presented in chapters 4, 6, 7 and 8.

Analyses of the essay topics that students are given to write on in the general English language class and mainstream English literature classes in the First Year of the English Department is presented in Chapter 4. The findings identify the main types of essay topics that are set for students in the two different contexts before moving on to looking at the essays they compose.

Chapter 5 presents the analytical approach and develops the models for analysing students' essays by studying previous research, the actual essays from the two contexts and opinions of discourse community members.

In Chapter 6, the essays from the two contexts are analysed from the perspective of move analysis and an attempt is made at identifying patterns running across the essays.

The views of students and teachers on writing of essays to corroborate the text analysis are provided in Chapters 7 and 8 respectively.

Finally, Chapter 9 concludes the study by answering the research questions briefly, providing an integrated discussion and implications of the main findings, summarising

contributions and recommendations, pointing out the limitations and giving suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER 2: GENERAL LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

In educational contexts, writing is viewed as a productive skill that students of all levels are required to master in order to perform well academically, more so if the students belong to traditional educational contexts like ours. This happens because the most common tool of either formative or summative assessment is through the writing of extended pieces or the essays, which gains more importance as students progress to higher education (Womack 1993). These essays vary from being course work essays/assignments to final exam essays written under severe time pressure where students have to demonstrate their knowledge, and therefore have been viewed as the “undergraduate’s Amazon” (Hounsell 1984: 103), an exercise with “a certain amount of trepidation” (Norton 1990: 411), the “default genre” (Womack 1993: 42). In addition to that, because of the frequent occurrence as a task within academia, essay writing is valued by both students and teachers and is often considered synonymous with academic writing.

Although much research has been conducted on academic writing, students’ essays produced within timed conditions have remained under-researched. This type of essay is not just very important in my context but also many other parts of the world. Moreover, research has been carried out in the US, the UK and Australian contexts on discipline specific writing by NS and NNS but hardly any research has been done on discipline specific writing produced by NNS (for example, Bangladeshi writers of English

literature studies) in NNS contexts. This research, therefore, seeks to examine writing of discipline specific essays by NNS (here, Bangladeshi student writers of English literature) away from NS contexts.

Before looking into the details of the essay form, I attempt to discuss what we understand by academic writing.

2.1 Academic writing

Although academic writing is generally distinguished from professional writing with the former being produced within educational institutions and the latter being produced in professional contexts, Anson (1988) argues that within certain professions the two discourses might not always remain strictly separate; at times they may be independent and at other times they may become interdependent or overlapping. Anson (1988), therefore, claims that academic writing should instead be delineated by classifying it into ‘professional’, ‘curricular’ and ‘developmental’ writing. These are three different acts of writing depending on the writer’s position, social purpose of the text and context within which it is produced (Wharton 1999). Consequently, it can be said that ‘professional’ function of writing refers to that use of academic discourse which is practised among experts in a given field like medicine, law, or business, and which increases the field’s base of knowledge; ‘curricular’ function refers to the way writing is used in and across discipline-specific school settings; ‘developmental’ function refers to the role of “intellectual transitions” (Anson 1988: 4) or progress that writers must acquire within a particular academic context. From this perspective, university level

students' writing is 'curricular' and 'developmental'. It is considered 'curricular' because it is assessment oriented and is an integral part of the educational curriculum. It is 'developmental' because students, in order to write, must read widely and critically and learn about the subject and display that knowledge.

The 'curricular' aspect of academic writing raises issues about the kind of tests students should be assessed with and under which conditions. This in turn brings us to the issue of time and to the general belief that students perform much better when they produce multiple drafts of their work and when they are given more time. This view propounded by Raimes (1991: 415) is related to process writing which sees "writing as learning" as against "writing for display" or examination. One study that argues against this view is Caudery (1990) who found there were insignificant differences in the performances between timed and untimed essay tests where he studied adolescent Cypriot GCE O-level examinees writing TOEFL examination type 'impromptu' essays. However, the latter study did acknowledge the possibilities of errors and suggested further research is needed. Even today examination bodies use timed essay tests as their major means of assessment and for that reason issues regarding timed essays and untimed essays are useful areas for research. Although my study does not concern this issue (timed essays and untimed essays) directly, it nevertheless has an important status as a major part of the investigation is conducted on corpus data produced for timed examination.

Returning to the different functions of academic writing, two ideological functions that are similar to 'curricular' and 'developmental' writing have been identified by Kroll

(1980) in the US context from the pedagogic perspective of composition writing at college levels. They are: 'interventionism' and 'maturationism'. Kroll (1980) asserts that the major concern of the interventionist approach is on the transmission of the content of instruction and the technical skills. More focus is laid on understanding the literary texts than on writing on one hand, and on the other the transmission of the external conventions of written texts, like punctuation, sentence, paragraph structure, which genre of prose and so on. In contrast to interventionism, the maturationist approach emphasises personal growth where development is perceived as spontaneous and natural. The emphasis of this approach is on personal writing, with the conviction that any writing course can be successful if students can explore their experiences of self-discovery. The shift towards maturationist tradition of education was a major move in the US from the early 20th century. These two approaches provide one explanation why departments design their writing courses sometimes on the basis of their mainstream content courses and why some others focus on writing aimed at self-discovery. In our Department, the maturationist tradition is more or less followed in spite of being in the 21st century. However, adopting these approaches do not always solve problems as is evident from our own scene (see Chapter 6, 7 and 8). One big issue that always needs to be taken into consideration is, which approach or approaches work well in which context.

Research done in some U.K. universities (Lea and Street 1998, 2000; Jones, Turner and Street 1999) has shown that writing in universities is based on three models: 1) study skills model sees students' writing as technical and instrumental where a set of

atomised skills are learnt and reproduced; 2) academic socialisation model inculcates students into the culture or discourse community of their particular department; 3) academic literacies model views literacies as a social practice addressing issues of epistemology and identity rather than only skills or socialisation.

Of the three models, the ‘academic literacies model’ is the one that is closest to this study, that is, my educational context practice. I, too, agree with Lea and Street (1998:158) that “learning in higher education involves adapting new ways of knowing: new ways of understanding, interpreting and organising knowledge.” This practice is very contextualised and takes into account the “cultural and contextual component of writing and reading practices” and the “conventions of academia”. This model also takes into account the other two models which give an in depth understanding into the nature of students’ writing with an emphasis on institutionalised practices as well as the role of the student’s identity and engagement as a writer with the audience, and this may vary from discipline to discipline.

This calls for a discussion of academic writing and its relationship with discourse community.

2.1.1 Academic writing and the concept of discourse community

The issue of discourse community has already arisen in the earlier section when defining academic writing from the perspective of community membership and sense of belonging. This section will explore the concept of discourse community further. The

notion of discourse community is perceived as a socialisation process involving a group of people which has been characterised by Swales (1990: 24-27) as possessing the following six characteristics: 1) common goals; 2) participatory mechanisms; 3) information exchange; 4) community-specific genres; 5) specialist lexis; 6) a high level of expertise.

This widely accepted definition of discourse community was, however, later problematised by Swales himself in *Other Floors, Other Voices* (1998). He found discourse community a ‘vague term of art’ because within each discourse community were other discourse communities or variations with “wildly different perspectives and purposes of its members” (p.199). He further added that the term ‘place discourse community’ or PDC was more appropriate in capturing the specifics of the membership and the practices which the members engaged in. Following that line of argument, it would be problematic to term any disciplinary academic community as being discourse community, but a particular academic community located in a particular place with particular ways of belonging can be considered a discourse community.

In this study, the English Department of Dhaka University will be considered as a discourse community and students’ academic writing will be considered as one of the products of that community. Having said that, we must also acknowledge what Bex (1996) and Barton (1994) noted, that is, discourse communities cannot remain untouched by other communicative practices and that there are always going to be some overlapping memberships.

Academic writing, a product of a particular academic community, can also be conceived as a product of discourse community possessing expert and novice members in the Swalesian sense. The members (teachers and students) in my context must share the set of conventions and social practices that are considered valuable for increased participation. Since tertiary education is discipline specific, the novice writers on entering the programme must learn to acclimatise to the new ways of writing that are catered more towards disciplinary practices, beliefs and values as they are understood in the particular department (Flowerdew 2000a, Lillis and Turner 2001). The task of enabling students to participate smoothly and excel in performance must be initiated by expert members' mechanisms using instructions and feedback (Swales 1990).

What happens to my students in the First year in terms of their writing during the process of socialisation into the discourse community of the English Department is one of the strands that this study intends to trace.

Before moving into a discussion of the concept of higher level academic writing being discipline specific, the next section will discuss the responsibilities of the student writer as a member of the academic community.

2.1.2 Producers of academic writing

In any academic discipline, there is a population of serious scholars with the purpose of research and publication and there is also another set of the population where writers are students writing assignments for the purpose of being evaluated (Ivanic and Simpson

1992). Researchers are established scholars who write serious academic pieces like journal articles, papers and books with complete knowledge of their field. This academic writer attempts to fill in the 'niche' with his/her original contribution in the field of study which is often discipline specific (2.1.3). This attempt to fill in a niche is absent in First year undergraduate writing as students have been told what to do.

It is generally thought that writers are always in a more powerful position than readers but such is not the case with student writers. The writing task requires the student writer to demonstrate the knowledge that he/she has acquired in the course of study and, hence, cannot exercise all authority within the discourse community. And the recipients of this writing in most cases are the tutors, who are quite knowledgeable on the assigned topic. The student with the social role of a novice writer writes what he/she reads and often reproduces that content which is not their own opinions. Within the Bangladeshi context and many similar contexts like it (Pakistan, Nepal, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia etc.), students reconstruct borrowed ideas from other sources like books, lectures and seminars in order to make the writing piece sound more convincing and the argument and analysis more acceptable. Even at the university they memorise chunks of texts from other books and reproduce that. Such 'textual borrowing' is considered to be plagiarism from Western perspectives. However, Pennycook (1996) explores how the notions of ownership, borrowing others' texts and relationship between text and memorisation need to be viewed differently in different cultures and historical contexts.

Many of the skills involved with academic writing generally, like doing proper library research, synthesising information, finding and analysing evidence, differentiating formal and informal style, using footnotes and bibliography (Jordan 1997) are Western concepts and remain uncharted avenues for our novice writers. A point to note is that most university teachers in Bangladesh have been exposed to Western educational environments. They are an elite group who were first educated in the same state university as the novices, then developed their education in another system and finally regrouped in the first system bringing with them expectations that are formed by a different set of experiences. There is, thus, a wide gap between the novices and the teachers with their discourse community expectations. Even in native speaker contexts, where students are provided the departmental handbooks with detailed assessment criteria, student writers have often found themselves in a state of confusion wondering about the writing criteria “which are often shrouded in mystery” on which they are evaluated by the tutors (Ivanic and Simpson 1992: 152). In my context, the situation is even worse because everyone from teachers, evaluators and students work on the basis of their subjective judgements as neither any independent criterion nor any rating scale for writing or evaluating writing tasks are provided. Despite that, no matter how vulnerable the novice writers may be in whichever context, as they have trodden into the academic community they are required to display certain standardised academic conventions. Their writing should possess good presentation (academic style, accurate standard English, grammatically error-free, correct spelling), structure (sentence, paragraph-text level construction, logical progression of ideas), and content/argument (quality of knowledge, critical evaluation of that primary and secondary knowledge,

ability to construct original argument) (McMillan and Weyers 2007). What happens in these struggling conditions has not been studied before. Hence, this study tries to get a sense of what students and teachers in my context value in writing and what seems to happen in actual practice in such contexts.

Many academics working with university writing emphasise that it is a specifically disciplinary discursive practice. They argue that the higher one climbs on his/her educational ladder the more discipline specific the required writing becomes (Bizzell 1982, Swales 1990, Hyland 2000, Woodward-Kron 2002, Coffin et al. 2003, Hewings 2007, Dressen-Hammouda 2008). Therefore, the next sections will discuss this vital aspect of academic writing, that is, the nature of discipline specificity.

2.1.3 Discipline-specific academic writing

Swales (2001: 52) notes that tertiary level academic writing is not a “straightforward cumulative process, but more a matter of new starts and unexpected adjustments.” The same idea of academic disciplines being not straightforward has been drawn by Becher and Trowler (2001) also. Every individual disciplinary context possesses different approaches, expectations and requirements. Stylistic features, rhetorical structures, use of personal and authorial voice along with social and epistemological factors that may be valued in one discipline may not be welcome in another. And in this respect Bazerman’s study (1981) on published academic writing by native speakers (NS) from the fields of molecular biology, sociology of science and literary criticism delineates how patterns and modes of writing a scholarly argument in essays differed in different

subject areas because of the typicalities and variations that existed within each discipline; how each discipline specific text has its own ways to structure its argument in terms of the purpose or object of study, literature of the field, audience and personal voice. By studying texts only he found that typicalities existed, however he suggested that more investigations needed to be carried out to support his findings.

This was substantiated by Becher's detailed investigations. His studies (1981, 1987, 1994) have made a significant contribution into the relationship between the nature of knowledge and working practices of academic disciplines in the UK. In his study on three contrasting disciplines—history, sociology and physics, Becher (1987) collects information from varied sources: scholarly literature, small scale analysis of leading journals from each discipline and other materials gathered during a period of 5/6 years of his investigation on discipline specific study. These led him to reveal valuable information about how linguistic forms differ from discipline to discipline and from level to level. To explicate this idea further, Becher defines the concept of 'tacit knowledge' used by Gerholm (1984, 1990), which is about the implicit taken-for-granted knowledge and understanding that members within a particular community possess and expect everyone else in the membership to recognise too. In another study (1994), Becher summarises his findings from 1980 to 1993 which involved research practices of 12 contrasting disciplinary areas, more focused studies on particular fields and 350 in-depth semi-structured interviews with academics and research students where he derived four broad categories of study disciplines mainly based on earlier studies by Biglan (1973) and Kolb (1981).

Biglan (1973)	Kolb (1981)	Disciplinary areas
Hard pure	Abstract reflective	Natural sciences
Soft pure	Concrete reflective	Humanities& soc.science
Hard applied	Abstract active	Science-based professions
Soft applied	Concrete active	Social professions

Table 2.1: Broad disciplinary groupings (Becher 1994:152)

These distinctions highlight a view that there are specific communication norms and conventions that are intrinsic to particular disciplines.

Becher and Trowler (2001: 44-45) using the metaphor of ‘tribe’ argue that each academic discipline possesses “recognizable identities and particular cultural attributes”, and citing Clark (1963) elaborate that each discipline exists as separate “estate” with distinctive “sub-cultures”. Membership of any disciplinary community will require the members to immerse into the cultural milieu, that is, “the tradition, customs and practices, transmitted knowledge, beliefs, morals and rules of conduct as well as their linguistic and symbolic forms of communication and the meanings they share” (p.47). In order for the novice members to fully enter their disciplinary communities, they must be aware of these conventions by which they will have to communicate their ideas and how they will in turn be evaluated. The people who have the responsibility of initiating this process are the expert members and the gate keepers.

A study conducted by Nesi and Gardner (2006) gathered detailed contextual information by interviewing academic staff responsible for designing and assessing of

writing courses. The interviews focussed on what their expectations were about writing of essays and showed how the essays varied in nature depending on discipline, level of study, educational approach and nature of the higher education institution in the UK. Although this study did not present any textual evidence, there were other research studies conducted by them on students' writing of essays in UK universities, for example studies reporting on the initial stages of an ESRC funded project to investigate genres of assessed writing in British HE (Nesi et al. 2005), investigating section headings and assignment types across university disciplines (Gardner and Holmes 2006), investigations of students' perceptions of their writing (Gardner and Powell 2006) .

My study with its limited scope has tried to capture insights into the disciplinary practices not only from textual analysis and expert members' perceptions but also from novice members. I believe it is essential to also address what novices think and feel when I am trying to construct meaning of the social phenomenon of students' essay writing and why things get shaped the way they are. Reality is "pluralistic" (Richards 2003: 39) and in order to get a comprehensive picture, it was necessary that I undertake a multi-method approach in this study.

Likewise, Hyland (2000: 3) asserts that "scholarly discourse is not uniform and monolithic". Perceiving academic writing skill as "universal and transferable" (p.147) within the EAP community is a misconception that complicates the learners' participation. In the following passage, Hyland (2000: 147) observes how teachers can

find ways of helping students to understand what is expected and valued in discipline specific contexts:

By making students aware of how literacy practices are grounded in social structures, undermining the 'single literacy' view, we can make transparent those practices that otherwise seem objective, reified and universal. We have to reveal writing as relative to particular groups and contexts, and reject a teaching approach which implicitly accepts EAP as a remedial exercise. We are not correcting a deficit in students' writing weakness, but helping them to unpack the requirements of their discipline.

One point to be noted is that when students enter tertiary education they go through a complex transitional phase in the process of trying to become members of a discourse community and acquiring the required 'tacit knowledge'. This becomes doubly intimidating when students enter from an L1 background to a completely L2 situation. In my context, when students very enthusiastically get admitted into the English Department (one of the most demanding subjects during the admission process) they do not even know what they will eventually study. One of my student interviewees (S5) reflected:

...some students only think that English is a good subject, that's why they should study in the English Department. But they don't even know that they have to read English literature. During the admission I also heard many students inquiring about what they'll have to study in this subject, 'Was it only grammar that was taught?' Among them there were good students too. They thought that only grammar will be taught in English. They didn't know that literature is taught here. They come here only because they get the chance and this is a good subject. So after getting admitted in the English Department, there are many students who don't enjoy the subject. They don't like to read poetry, they don't enjoy analysing them- everyone doesn't have the love for literature. Due to this disinterestedness for literature, even a student who is basically good, cannot analyse the texts, or cannot compare the characters. They find it hard. They think that even solving a

complex maths problem is easier than this. They think these are silly matters. They get frustrated studying English. And if anyone doesn't have an interest in a subject, he also won't have interest in writing on it... If there is interest and love, then there will be concentration. So if we don't enjoy something, then how can we take our writing tasks seriously (S5 ll 357-385).[translated]

Such a situation illustrates how difficult it must be for a student to become a competent member, an insider to the community and become familiar with the “nuances of its cultural practices and linguistic usage” and start functioning within the milieu (Canagarajah 2002:30).

Canagarajah's (2002) paper on multilingual student writers draws our attention to the fact that pedagogy relating to academic writing has of late become very sensitive to the writer's relationship with his/her discourse community. This realisation has led to the increase in designing Content-based courses in academic writing hoping to enhance students' knowledge constructs of disciplinary communities, a return to the ideological function of 'interventionism' (2.1) of not simply teaching how to write but also what to write. He reiterates the views introduced by Lave and Wenger (1991) that since students begin as novices and not experts, the best practice is through 'peripheral participation' till students have developed the insider knowledge and become full members. In order to remain in close proximity of the community, students should be provided with easy access to the activities of the community through meaningful tasks. The focus is laid on 'apprenticeships' where students would work collaboratively among themselves with mentoring from disciplinary specialists. This is a clear indication that English language writing should be developed from a more situated learning perspective if we want our

students to familiarise with the knowledge and conventions of the mainstream discipline with a gradual entry.

Within our context, what happens is not a very joyful experience for the novice writer. The process of orientating into the disciplinary community becomes intimidating because teachers fail to realise the reality and expect students coming to the English Department to be proficient linguistically. Although English Language classes in my department are provided to help students with their language skills, there is no such attempt made in the literature classes because Literature classes are lecture-based as revealed in chapters 7 and 8, (7.1.2.5, 7.2.2.1, 8.2.2.1.iii and 8.2.2.6).

What students now need from their present English Language course is not a completely “discipline-independent approach” (Becher 1994: 158) but techniques and strategies that will help them perform better within their mainstream disciplinary culture. In support of this idea, I want to add Becher’s (1994: 158) reference to Bazerman’s study of the three contrasting disciplines where he agrees that discipline independent writing will not be appropriate as the “whole mode of writing differs radically” in the three disciplines and “it is necessary to immerse oneself in the structure of the discourse” which cannot be done through “a few broadly-based sessions on how to write an essay.”

In this connection, a study by Lea and Street (1998) on students’ institutional writing and tutor feedback problems needs to be cited. The study focuses on two universities from southern England where students in their First term were required to take courses

from diverse disciplines for their degree programme and had to write for these courses unaware of the writing requirements for each course. I found a striking similarity in the findings of this study with my situation. This study also argues for moving away from the skill based, 'discipline-independent' approach to a more individual and disciplinary bound approach. It shows how departmental guidelines on writing were similar to what they had received in their A level or Access writing courses which were basically on how to formally organise a piece of writing or present an argument. Students in general could "assimilate this general advice on writing 'techniques' and 'skills' but found it difficult to move from the general to using this advice in a particular text in a particular disciplinary context" (p.164). They further add that the guidelines in universities dealt with surface issues like, grammar, punctuation, spelling, forms of referencing, bibliographies, footnotes, plagiarism, but rarely dealt with issues that students had most difficulties in, that is, writing for specific courses for a particular tutor or field of study. They also cite how a first year history student received very opposing feedback, one very positive and the other very discouraging (like lack of structure and argument), from his history and anthropology subject tutors, although he had written them in the same style. Lea and Street (1998: 165) suggest that the student's poor performance in the anthropology essay was due to his/her "lack of familiarity with the subject matter of anthropology." This game of "course switching" has rules that students find hard to master.

As the thrust of this study is to look into students' essays belonging to a particular discipline specific discourse community, that is, First year university students doing

English Literature major, the next sections will show what is required from students to write for literature. The study is also about source-text dependent and source-text independent writing, the next section will concentrate on the discipline responsible for students' text dependent writing.

2.2 Writing for English Literature

A strong argument claimed in the studies by Leki and Carson (1997) and Atkinson and Ramanathan (1995) (discussed in 2.3.1.2 in detail and in 9.3) is that the language EAP writing course fails to promote linguistic and intellectual growth in the students because the writing tasks most of the time lack subject content text dependency.

Writing for literature is very much text dependent, with reading and writing working in tandem. Efficient and effective writing in literature will depend on its interdependence with the reading of the text. The idea of how an individual uses his/her intellect and emotions to respond and provide insights to a literary text is the essence of a literature essay, given these responses are well referenced, proven and developed. A successful reading of a literary text involves acts of cultural and literary awareness along with linguistic competence which includes understanding of literary language with its specialised lexis and the ability to apply the language skills and enabling the student to enter into a Bakhtinian dialogic relationship with the text.

Writing for literature, therefore, involves one to be sharply aware of his/her personal responsiveness as a reader (Dixon 1983). However, the question remains as to how

much of students' responses is their own and how much belongs to secondary sources or "learnt from potted notes or prepared notes" (Spiro 1991: 24). It is one of my goals to see what students with FL/L2 background and without having read English literature before do to increase their participation into the community.

2.2.1 Literary competence

Literary competence is a difficult concept to pin down as it does not have a straightforward definition because of the changing perspectives of different theorists at different times. For instance, literary competence from the humanist tradition is in stark opposition with the structuralist tradition. Stanley Fish's 1980 interpretation of text being dependent upon each reader's subjective response and his/her interaction with the interpretive community is completely different from Jonathan Culler's (Jonathan Culler and Literary competence, <http://athena.english.vt.edu/~cbala/hausman/haus/competence.html>) response against the plural interpretations of a text. For Culler, what is important in literary competence is not what the text means but how the text means because he follows a structuralist, scientific approach where it is the systematic linguistic structure that allows a text to make meaning. For ESL/EFL students getting at the crunch of literary competence is a daunting affair.

When students in the First year start attending classes, they begin studying the literary canons in a very traditional approach with teacher centred lectures focusing on the lives of the authors, background of the texts, and giving interpretations on the various aspects

of the texts. Students simply sit through the lectures taking down notes verbatim, preparing essays for written exams without having any working knowledge of how a literature essay should be constructed. These students not only have to struggle with understanding the text but also have to face the challenges of acquiring the linguistic competency.

Rodger (1983: 45) encompassing the complex debatable theoretical views propounds that the “acquisition of literary competence demands communicative competence as its essential prerequisite”, which is all the more effective in the teaching of literature in ESL/EFL teaching contexts. In the same fashion, Isenberg (1990) in her paper on young adult EFL students’ difficulties with reading and understanding of English literature regards EFL literary competence as an “intellectual performance” that is developed through several stages of information processing and thought processing. Literary reading as information processing involves five distinct steps: transformation, reduction, classification, storage and retrieval, which embrace certain cognitive procedures like formulating questions, establishing logical and analogical relationships, selecting and rejecting information, organising and recognising, ordering and reordering findings, generalising, and evaluating to be successful.

A similar procedure is confirmed by Spiro’s (1991) model of literary competence with more elaborations and can be useful in discussing the multiple areas that are required for students to be successful in their interaction with literary texts. Spiro’s (1991) model of literary competence was set against some controversies about whether literary

competence should be seen as a part of linguistic competence or be a separate unit of analysis and also whether it was appropriate to divide literary competence into subskills, the latter mainly coming from the traditionalist's humanistic global approach to non-divisibility of literary competence. Spiro (1991:39) felt that, to students with an L2 background, the definitions of global competence-- (i) informed appreciation of literature, (ii) ability to respond appropriately to all literature in the target language, (iii) ability to analyse and define responses to literature, (iv) ability to relate literature to one's personal experience/to empathise with text, (v) ability to place literature within a wider social/cultural/linguistic context; and (vi) enjoyment of literature, would have very little relevance if they are unable to understand the text. However, she also acknowledges the dangers of dividing literary competence and advocates that there should be a balance between global competence and divisibility of literary competence. Then, even students with low linguistic proficiency who are reading literature in FL/L2 context can appreciate literature and enhance their ability to recognise and understand literary patterns through the literary skills provided to them. As a result, Spiro (1991) provides a working model of literary competence dividing it into six levels with each having a number of skills that can be used according to the student needs: (i) Understanding meaning of text, (ii) Understanding context (e.g. author's life, historical background etc.), (iii) Learning to empathise (feelings, characters etc.), (iv) Learning to appreciate the text (e.g. sound, imagery, genre), (v) Learning to be creative (expressing feelings, describing settings, using imagery) and, (vi) Learning the critical framework (New Criticism, Structuralism).

From the above discussion of Spiro's model, it is evident that without linguistic competence it will be difficult for a FL/L2 learner to be literarily competent. This has also been reiterated by Short (1996) in his emphasis for stylistic interpretation over general interpretation. However, I feel that Short's stylistic interpretation will have to be supplemented with some of the global competence issues as Spiro has done in order for the whole text to be appreciated instead of only parts of it (Spiro 1991). The above studies address students, both NS and NNS, who have read English literature before. Spiro's model, as mentioned earlier, seems helpful for my students but in this study I would like to find out from the texts and from students and teachers whether students who have not read English Literature before as a subject can apply these critical skills while writing literature essays.

Since my research is based on the 'essay' that the 'novice' student authors produce, the next sections will look into the different types of the essays and a discussion of whether the essay form is a genre or not.

2.3 The essay as a concept

The term 'essay' derived from French *essai*, meaning 'attempt' has always been broadly used as any long piece of writing in prose with a purpose where the text would be divided into paragraphs and sections linked to each other through the introduction, body and conclusion; the main idea or argument restated in the conclusion, the writer's ideas progressing and initiation indicated through clear signposting. The essay has often been seen to be synonymous with the term composition, which to a great extent is true at

lower levels but as students advance to tertiary levels they soon realise how the essays lose the common features that compositions possessed earlier and become more complex and possess their typicalities according to their own disciplinary areas.

Womack (1993) in his study of the status of writing essays in English courses run by Open University in the UK not only shows how essentially it is the best way to evaluate students, but also gives a historical development of the essay. The modern essay, although a literary form improvised by Montaigne, Bacon, Johnson, Addison, got developed into its present functional position by its entry into the examination system as a main testing item.

In the past, essays meant the handling of a topic in a very informal, casual way, which did not necessarily have to be very structured. This idea was also reiterated by Andrews (2003) where writers practise all their sentiment and freedom of thought in whichever style best suited the topic. However, when this topic was handled as a 'theme' it emphasised a rigorous maintenance of all the formal rhetorical elements: proposition, reason, confirmation, simile, example, testimony, conclusion. By the late eighteenth century the distinctive characteristics between the essay and theme began to overlap each other. They "fell into meaninglessness, and the conflation was essay" which became a "dominant form of English composition in schools" by the early nineteenth century (Womack 1993: 44). With the rise of the Industrial Revolution in Britain, there was a sharp rise in the interest in education by the middle class. Everyone was interested to enter into the bureaucratic system and this led to the introduction of the competitive

public examination pioneered by the Indian Civil Service Examination in 1857 where the selection of successful candidates was based on their performance in English examination. These examinations were designed to test the candidates' "intellectual, moral and cultural qualities" through the form of the essay (Womack 1993:45). It is because of this sense of "compulsion and self-interest" that the essay form has been termed as 'default genre' by Womack and continues to be so by others, one being Andrews (2003: 117) who also claims that the essay "represents the state of a student's understanding and is assessed accordingly... their principal function is to gain a mark or grade on the way to a degree."

No matter what, the 'essay' is still the most commonly practised written task undertaken by the undergraduate and postgraduate students (Eblen 1983, Womack 1993, Henry and Roseberry 1997, Andrews 2003, Moore and Morton 2005). Once essays entered into the examination system, they began to be the most heavily weighted examination item on which students were judged and began to be given most priority of all classroom tasks. It is evident that the essay was chosen for examination oriented assessment because it was thought to be accessible to everybody who could use English. In Bangladesh, this post-imperialistic legacy still continues and affects the students and teachers alike. However, this seemingly accessible tool has certain qualities that one needs to master to be successful --- presentation, structure and content being the three main criteria (McMillan and Weyers 2007) as mentioned in Section 2.1.2. In addition to those, special skills, tactical choices and awareness of many other related issues are also required to be a writer of good essays at different stages of one's academic life. Since the structure

of the essay form holds the prime focus in this study, it is important to have an overview of what is said in literature about the structural pattern of essays before looking at the different types of essays written at different stages.

2.3.1 Structure of the essay

The traditional academic essay according to Crème and Lea (2003: 35), like many others, possesses “an introduction, which sets the scene; a main body, in which you outline and develop your argument; and a conclusion, in which you bring everything together”. Crème and Lea (2003) point out a mismatch between students’ declarative and productive knowledge. They observe that most students at universities could articulate the principles of the structure, that they knew what the structure was supposed to be but in practice their writing did not reflect their knowledge of the structure. I assume this is more or less a universal phenomenon but despite that my interest is to identify how much students know about structuring of essays, to what extent they knew about it and was there a discrepancy between what they said they knew and what they actually did.

Oshima and Hogue (1999) elaborating on the three parts show that the ‘Introductory’ paragraph is a funnel shaped construction comprising two parts, general statements and a thesis statement with four purposes to fulfil: 1. introduces the topic of the essay, 2. provides some background information of the topic, 3. often indicates the overall plan of the essay and, 4. should arouse the reader’s interest in the topic. The ‘Body’ paragraphs can be several, providing the subtopics and supporting evidences and explanations to the

controlling idea of the thesis statement. They present the arguments, claims/views/ideas to be discussed supported by evidence and followed by logical interpretation done in 'logical progression' (Redman 2006: 18). Oshima and Hogue (1999) emphasise the use of transition signals to bring about the relationship between paragraphs and ideas, which can be in form of a single word, phrase or a clause that summarises or repeats the main idea in the first paragraph. The final paragraph is the 'Conclusion', which houses 1. a summary of the main points, or a restatement of the thesis statement in different wordings, 2. a final comment on the subject based on the information/argument provided and, 3. a conclusion signal.

The structural knowledge is very useful as it provides a pattern which apparently helps the writer to organise the ideas easily. However, literature shows that essay writing for different disciplines is not uniform. Crème and Lea (1999: 1) rightly pointed out that there are common 'myths' or preconceived general ideas regarding university writing, like, students lack basic skills, some groups of students cannot write, there is one way of academic writing, academic writing is depersonalised, and these they recommended should be challenged by detailed investigations. Tutor expectations, disciplinary perspectives, social conventions vary across disciplines and although templates and frameworks can be used, one should be aware of holistic approach to constructing knowledge and meaning through their writing (Crème and Lea 1999).

In the First year, our students worry more about grammatical errors in their written texts and their lack of linguistic proficiency and overlook the importance of overall textual

organisation. Looking into the structure of essays from the perspective of genre is, therefore, an aim of this study.

Studies have been conducted that imply that genre studies can help students raise their awareness and knowledge in essay patterns and the relationships between different parts of the essay. Existing literature (Hopkins and Dudley-Evans 1988; Swales 1990, 2004; Hyland 1990, 2000, 2003, 2007; Bhatia 1993; McCarthy and Carter 1994; Paltridge 2001, 2002; Henry and Roseberry 1999; Flowerdew 2000b; Santos 2002; Martinez 2002; Derewianka 1990, 2003; Huttner 2005; Dessen-Hammouda 2008; Johns 2008 etc.) shows how identifying different text patterns, text frames, text structure, rhetorical organisation and making students aware of them can be a valuable starting point and useful instrument in facilitating students' recognition of typical patterns, understanding of coherence in writing, development of text, organising information as well as comprehension of written texts. Hopkins and Dudley-Evans (1988) contend that enabling students to get familiar with the description of the organisation of particular kinds of texts can be a useful tool in ESP pedagogy. Similarly, Flowerdew (2000b: 375) also recommends teaching of organisational structure and ordering of move structures as a "starting point for helping students to acquire competence in a particular genre". Genre based analysis, Santos (2002) like Swales (1990) observes, is beneficial but it should be used for descriptive and not prescriptive purposes, which in words of Bhatia (1993: 40) is "pattern seeking" rather than "pattern imposing". Further literature on genre studies will be reviewed in Chapter 5.

The next sections will present an overview of the kinds of essays students are required to write in their academic life.

2.3.1.1 School compositions in L1 contexts

Essays written by students at primary and secondary schools are often called compositions, both free and guided, that they produce using certain skills and strategies to perform well. They are called academic because they are written by students for their teachers. However, they vary a lot from those written at higher levels of study for the simple reason that they lack the intensity of any researched piece of work. The art of composing is a fundamental skill that is acquired with difficulty over the years. In the primary levels, students are concerned with listening, reading and telling stories. This eventually leads them to write stories and narratives on events they experience at first hand and the events that are represented in the story world once they start writing in the classroom (Britton 1983).

One very common type of essay/composition practised by many high school students particularly in the USA is the five-paragraph essay, where the pattern has an Introduction followed by three Body paragraphs with three arguments in order of priority and ending with a Concluding paragraph (Aller-Stead, The Five Paragraph Essay <http://www.aller.stead.com/martin/pics/oac5paragraph.ppt>).

The five-paragraph essay has a defined prescriptive pattern and is very useful for timed situations especially for school and high school level students. However, at tertiary

levels where higher order skills are more involved, it poses potential problems. The paragraph divisions simply help the reader in understanding how many arguments the writer has and in an essay you cannot restrict the writer to three points because the number of paragraphs depend on how the ideas will develop and how much one has to say.

In Bangladeshi pre-university levels, the national curriculum board recommends students to be taught English from a skill based CLT approach. At Secondary level (class 6-10) the syllabus requires students to write simple instructions, short compositions (narratives, descriptions, arguments), summaries, dialogues and formal/informal letters which may either be guided or unguided. The short compositions are meant to be done by undergoing group discussions to brainstorm ideas encouraging students to use their existing language ability and their understanding of language as discourse and not discrete sentences.

A study conducted on the Secondary level English curriculum in Bangladesh by Hasan (2004) identified several inconsistencies between the syllabus objectives and its implementation. He reveals how at present there were significant gaps in what is intended to be taught, what was taught and what was being measured. With regards to teaching of writing compositions, he found that teaching was primarily done using Grammar Translation Method, where the teacher would read out paragraphs or essays from books and translate it, and the students would either be asked to write similar paragraphs at home as homework which were rarely written by them and were primarily

copied from guidebooks. The same would happen in the case of testing the writing skills. Students would be given some stereotyped topics, the so-called topics of the supplementary books which students were bound to have memorised. He, thus, interprets that these tests are suitable to assess students' ability to memorise textbook content rather than their competency in writing on their own and creativity.

Examining the status of the present English curriculum Hasan (2004) recommends for a syllabus more catered towards general academic English so that it would meet the requirements of mainstream students entering tertiary education. Strangely enough, students do not have composition component in the present Higher Secondary English syllabus. They only write some guided/unguided paragraphs and brief answers to comprehension questions. No studies have been conducted as to why long compositions remain absent from the Higher Secondary English curriculum, and how short writing pieces are considered beneficial to students over long compositions.

2.3.1.2 Essays in ESL/EFL contexts

One of the disadvantages that ESL/EFL writers have compared to L1 writers is that they have to deal with a language which is not their own, and as a result it is only natural to suppose that the factors responsible for good essay writing (2.3.1.1, 2.3.1.3 and 2.1.3) will be approached very differently by students from L1 and FL/L2 contexts. We must realise that ESL/EFL writers are culturally and linguistically different from L1 writers. Numerous studies on ESL/EFL writing produced in L1 contexts and L2 environments, from both product and process perspectives and the nature of L1 and L2 writing (Silva

1993, Matsuda 1999, Atkinson and Ramanathan 1995, Santos 1992, Hinkel 2004, Wang and Wen 2002) have been conducted to identify the stumbling blocks that impede the path of ESL/EFL writers in order to ease their intricate situation. These studies argued against the assumptions made by researchers (Chelala 1981, Krapels 1990) that L1 and L2 writing would employ the same recursive process approach to writing.

Silva (1993) in his study on ESL writers at undergraduate programme in the US, reports that L1 and L2 writing differed in terms of their composing processes (planning, transcribing, reviewing), and features of written texts (fluency, accuracy, quality and structure) and also recommends that these differences need to be taken into consideration for areas of assessment, placement, staffing and writing pedagogy. Likewise, Matsuda (1999:700) suggests that there is a great need for writing instructors to be “more sensitive to the unique needs of ESL writers”. Atkinson and Ramanathan (1995: 539), following up on previous studies (Scollon 1991 cited in Atkinson and Ramanathan 1995, Inghilleri 1989 cited in Atkinson and Ramanathan 1995, Santos 1992, Silva 1993), indicate that the L1 and L2 writers possess such divergent cultural and social practices that academic success of L2 writers of English will be “negatively affected” if “uncritical application of L1 pedagogies” is forced on them. Another study by Ramanathan and Atkinson (1999) investigates how ESL writers have difficulties in accessing the highly regarded L1 (mainstream US) practices of individualism (voice, peer review, critical thinking and textual ownership) because of the differences in the cultural norms, ways of thinking and expressing of ideas. Quoting Cortazzi and Jin (1996: 177-178), Ramanathan and Atkinson (1999) demonstrate that memorisation for

Chinese students is not rote learning with the lack of creativity, personal interpretation and experiential learning as it is thought of in the West, rather it is an outcome of multiple factors like “large class size, the importance of discipline, the significance of giving children necessary knowledge, the pressures of the curriculum and exam system.” Similarly, Au and Entwistle’s (1999) study on Chinese learners obtaining high grades in Western universities argued that memorisation, which is perceived in the West as involving the lowest level of thinking, is in China an accepted part of conceptual understanding in the process of learning, particularly within timed examination settings. They contend that rote learning is a strategic approach in addition to it being a cultural construct, a derivative of a set of values, behavioural conventions and assumptions that are shared by the members of the Chinese teaching-learning community. Studies (Biggs 1979, Samuelowicz 1987, Ramsden 1985) particularly initiated from western contexts have associated rote learning with low cognitive level strategies and poor learning outcomes. It has been seen as a dominant and acceptable practice not only with students belonging to the ‘Confucian heritage’, but also among most Asian and Oriental cultures where strict discipline and passively accepting knowledge without questioning is the norm of the social milieu. However, Biggs (1996: 191) in a later study revealed that, for Asians, memorisation and understanding are “mutually supportive, not incompatible processes”. In addition to that, he claimed Chinese students found understanding to be more important than memorisation as a means to achieving understanding. The lower order elements are, therefore, not to be ignored and are important for fulfilling the “hierarchical relationship” (Waters 2006: 320). The studies by Biggs and Au and Entwistle only focus on students from Confucian cultures (China, Hong Kong, Japan,

Korea, Taiwan) studying in Western universities. I feel that these groups are far more privileged than my students because they come from highly developed economies where the education system, resources and living standards are far better than ours. Studies have not looked at these issues in regions that are underprivileged. Since memorisation plays an ambiguous role for Asian cultures, it remains to be seen how the concept is perceived in our teaching-learning context (Chapters 7 and 8).

Leki's (1992) argument also reiterated the same notion that the crisis encountered by ESL writers was due to the fact that they simply could not perceive the tacit knowledge that members of L1 community (teachers and students) of composition classes shared about the requirements of university writing. This study interestingly tries to capture partly the perceptions teachers and students of my context have regarding this L1-L2 writing culture dichotomy as will be evident in chapters 7 and 8 (7.2.2.1.v and 8.2.2.5.ii).

Scarcella's (2002) study on US immigrants identified the need for the following context factors affecting the development of advanced literacy in L2: high level of literacy in L1, strong basic oral proficiency in L2, interaction with proficient speakers, strong basic reading ability in L2, written text input in form of genre relevant models and attention to form. Although all these conditions are important for the development of L2 literacy, some of the them, like the second and the third factors, might be difficult to be attained by my students in my context as in many ESL/EFL context, since there are hardly any opportunities for the students to practise them.

Leki and Carson's (1997) study with non-native English speakers from graduate and undergraduate writing classes in the US revealed that writing for an ESL class was very different from writing for academic courses. Writing in the three different contexts was done in three different ways. The contexts were: 1) writing without source text, 2) writing from source text without responsibility for content and, 3) text responsible writing. Students found the first one limited to placement tests conditions and reflected on some of their worries, which were, time constraints, familiarity/unfamiliarity with the topic, lack of information, organisation of ideas, writing models and appropriate vocabulary. The second type was the real ESL type writing perceived by the students and they found both advantages and disadvantages in it. They felt that the source text provided them with stimulating ideas, food for thought, vocabulary, sentence structures, writing style, organisational patterns. However, it also created problems for them, because they had to understand the text first, there were too many ideas from the text and it was difficult for students to be selective and be able to organise and integrate their own ideas with that of the source text. In addition to those, another problem that students had to be concerned with was plagiarism, something that students in my context are hardly aware of, especially in the First year. Leki and Carson (1997) state that in ESL classes how students write is of crucial importance rather than what they write, whereas in the content course classes (3rd context) how students write does not matter as long as the content matter is good. This is a very real condition as it happens also in my case with the language essays and literature essays, an issue that will be taken up later in detail (in the interviews conducted with teachers and students, Chapters 7 and 8).

Coming back to the concept of plagiarism, it is noted that in spite of studies condemning ESL/EFL writers of “stealing” (Kolic 1983: 143) others’ ideas without acknowledging them and “cheating” (Murphy 1990: 899), Pennycook (1996) as stated before (2.1.2) has identified that often EFL/ESL writers are unjustly accused of plagiarising without taking into account cross-cultural factors like the differences in learning practices, cultural perceptions of ownership of texts, textual borrowing, memorisation within Eastern cultures and the educational backgrounds students belong to. Pennycook’s (1996) recommendation is to approach plagiarism in a more sensitive way. EFL/ESL students’ awareness should be raised regarding issues like the differences in copying and memorisation, citation conventions, ways of paraphrasing, how to handle textual borrowing and so on.

Similarly, the notions of voice, critical, thinking, originality, clarity and plagiarism, conceived in the Western writing classrooms, are expected by teachers at the university in our context (in the English Department) from our students doing English literature major. Teachers do not realise that in the First year students’ linguistic proficiency might not be capable of handling anything more challenging than topics like ‘First day in Campus’, ‘University Library’, ‘My Summer Vacation’, all drawn from their own experiences and topics that are extensions of their secondary and higher secondary school writing and that more needs to be done to develop their writing skill (Ahmed 1987).

2.3.1.3 Essays in English language proficiency writing test contexts

These types of essays are basically without a source text and are rarely found in academic writing situations except in situations like the admission test, remedial English classes or standardised English language proficiency tests used in many English speaking countries for NNS of English in obtaining jobs or getting admission into tertiary level colleges (TOEFL writing test or IELTS writing module, Task 2) which had been referred in section 2.3.1.2 in the study conducted by Leki and Carson (1997).

The Test of Written English (TWE) is the writing component in the TOEFL test in both the computer based and the paper based tests. The writing topics range widely, from agreeing/disagreeing, giving an explanation, arguing a case, stating a preference (Lougheed 2004:158). They are mainly argumentative in nature where the examinee is required to defend or explain a point of view on an assigned topic using the process of problem-solving as described by Toulmin's 1958 model (Connor 1987), and demonstrate linguistic proficiency.

The IELTS writing component comprises two tasks. Examinees are required to complete both in one hour's time. Task 1 is an information transfer type of writing task which requires the examinee to write a short description of information provided in the form of a diagram or graph or chart, whereas Task 2, similar to the TWE task, is an extended composition where he/she has "to provide general factual information, outline and/or present a solution, justify an opinion, and evaluate ideas and evidence" (UCLES 2002 cited in Moore and Morton 2005: 46) "with appropriate register, rhetorical

organisation, style and content” (UCLES 1996 cited in Moore and Morton 2005: 46). Moore and Morton’s study (2005) compares IELTS Task 2 rubric with assignments written by undergraduate and postgraduate students in Australian universities. In order to analyse these, they categorise both university assignments and IELTS Task 2 as ‘essays’ because they identify the purpose of the tasks as presenting an argument in response to a given proposition or question. One of their findings reveal that though these tasks influence students’ understanding of what academic writing in higher education in anglophone universities is to some extent, they are not exactly what students are required to produce at universities.

Another study that looks at IELTS Task 2 writing is by Coffin (2004) where she discusses the prompt features and sub-genres of the ‘argument’ essay. The prompt is usually a controversial proposition framed with a general set of instruction, as the following:

Present a written argument or case to an educated reader with no specialist knowledge of the following topic:

[Proposition]...

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this opinion? You should write at least 250 words. You should use your own ideas, knowledge and experience and support your arguments with examples and relevant evidence.

Source: Coffin (2004:234)

Coffin’s (2004) study found two types of argument genres, ‘exposition’ and ‘discussion’ genres, on the basis of the “degree to which the writer engages with a range of

perspectives or points of view” (p.239) already made explicit at the beginning of the essay. In an earlier study, Coffin et al. (2003) regarded ‘argument’ as a fuzzy concept which they observed could be used by different people with different conceptions. In most common cases, students are told of argument as a case of ‘for and against’. However, it can also refer to the notion of ‘evidence’ to prove a point . They go further to explain how the argument essay can have three different structures of composing, each differing in degree as to how the case is built: exposition, discussion and challenge. For ‘Exposition’ the writer initiates an argument by stating a position and then puts forth arguments and counter arguments and finally reinforces his/her position in the final stage. For ‘Discussion’ the essays begin with the controversial issue and through arguments and counter arguments reaches to take up a position in the end. The ‘Challenge’ type is where the writer begins with an opposition view and reaches the end trying to establish that.

Since my students also write source-text free essays for their language class, this study would also trace whether they write argument essays, and if they do, how they are conceptualised as an intellectual activity in my higher educational context and do students produce arguments in their essays.

2.3.1.4 Relationship between language proficiency writing test essays and university essays

It is already mentioned in section 2.3.1.3 that although similarities exist between IELTS Task 2 writing and higher level academic writing in terms of both being expository and

argumentative in nature, in the true sense of word they are dissimilar. Moore and Morton (2005) looked at the different features of the academic essay by studying a selection of IELTS Task 2 items and university assignments. They identified differences in four categories: 1) genre; 2) information source; 3) rhetorical function and 4) object of inquiry. The IELTS task was a spontaneous activity separate from reading, where one had to give opinions based on evidence in form of anecdotes or experience or 'prior knowledge' and these essays were assessed in terms of linguistic proficiency. Task 2 was seen as hortative or persuasive (for example, should this be done?) with real world phenomena as the proper subject of writing. On the other hand, almost all the university assignments involved a research component requiring students to use primary or/and secondary sources of information. Personal opinions were acceptable in some disciplines provided they were supported by valid, logical and established evidence, but not if they were only supported by anecdotes and personal experience. Writing was also analytical rather than practical or hortative. Assignments from theoretical disciplines, like humanities and social science required more of secondary sources and students had to be very careful about citation practices. Primary sources were used in research oriented disciplines with importance given to quantitative data in natural and social sciences and case study materials in law, management, economics where the data were mainly provided but needed to be interpreted.

Although a lot of the discipline specific nature of university writing has already been discussed in Section 2.1.3, now I focus mainly on essay writing. At the university, students may be required to write essays ranging from the traditional 500 words

(approximately) type to extended essays of 3000 words. They may also be asked to produce a thesis or case study as projects in some cases at the end of programme which may even be longer (McCormack and Slaght 2005). Students continue writing essays but writing for the university can be a daunting experience for the very reason that the expectations here are a great deal higher from what students have been producing so far. Here, what the students are required to develop is the ability to think critically (analysis, synthesis and evaluation), recognise biased presentation, organise thoughts and arguments logically and be creative and original according to discipline needs (McMillan and Weyers 2007). Analysis and looking beneath the surface rather than description and restating of facts or quotes are what will fetch more marks. In order to write analytical essays, students must have knowledge about the other types of essays as well, like recounts, reports, information, persuasion, discussion and so on. Short (1983) traces how literary studies with its wide range of activities (biography, history, culture, intertextual relationships and so on) require students to cover three stages: linguistic description, interpretation and evaluation for a complete understanding of the texts. There will also be times when the students might need to skilfully amalgamate various rhetorical functions in one essay.

University essays, therefore, have different ways of thinking, understanding, constructing and representing their body of knowledge because of the differing conventions present in the different disciplines and this becomes a complex affair when students in their early stages are confused by the conventions. The 'foreignness' of university study is often not made explicit to the students (Creme and Lea 2003: 14).

Each discipline has its own jargon, specialist lexis and ways of putting forth the argumentation which students are required to learn and make meanings of. And this takes us back to issues concerned with disciplinarity (2.1.3).

An essential feature of university writing is an understanding of what is needed in the task and how it is going to be assessed by the institution. The tasks can vary and can take the form of many genres, but since this study is on essays, I will focus on my discussion of the types of essays and expected outcomes of the essays from the institutional point of view. The next section is an attempt to define 'genre' and justify whether the 'essay' can be termed as 'genre' which has often been a subject of debate.

2.4 The concept of genre

Genre theory has been identified from the perspective of three focal approaches, according to Hyon (1996): 1. ESP (led by Hopkins and Dudley-Evans 1988, Swales 1990, Bhatia 1993, Flowerdew 1993, Thompson 1994 etc.), 2. Australian Systemic Functional Linguistics or the Sydney school (led by Halliday 1985, Halliday and Hasan 1989, Martin et al. 1987, Matthiessen 1995, Eggins and Slade 1997) and, 3. North American New Rhetoric studies (led by Miller 1984, Bazerman 1988, Devitt 1991, Freedman and Medway 1994 etc.).

All the three approaches involve analysis and teaching of spoken and written language from social, communicative and linguistic perspectives. However, the approaches differ in their treatment of the formal textual and grammatical features and the relationship of

the text with its social settings. Hyon observes that ESP and New Rhetoric schools' work concentrate more on the social perspective whereas the Australian Hallidayan school focuses on the linguistic and textual perspective.

The ESP researchers worked mainly with NNS in post-secondary academic and professional settings focussing on the communicative purposes within social settings. It is Swales (1990) who in his seminal work, *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings*, defines genre with its well argued detailing after an elaborate survey of four different fields: folklore, literary studies, linguistics and rhetoric. Genre according to him is (1990:58):

... a class of *communicative events*, the members of which share some set of *communicative purposes*. These purposes are recognized by the expert members of the *parent discourse community*, and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style. Communicative purpose is both a privileged criterion and one that operates to keep the scope of a genre as here conceived narrowly focused on comparable rhetorical action. In addition to purpose, exemplars of a genre exhibit various *patterns of similarity in terms of structure, style, content and intended audience*. If all high probability expectations are realized, the exemplar will be viewed as *prototypical* by the parent discourse community. (my italics)

The italicised words are the key words that define genre. From the above definition, it points to the fact that when a text plays an important role with a particular goal within its environment, and when it tends to conform to expected patterns and is recognised by community members then the text can be seen as an instantiation of a genre.

According to Hyon (1996), the New Rhetoric approach is concerned with L1 teaching and focuses more on the situational contexts in which the genres occur and the social action it is going to accomplish. It draws on “ethnographic rather than linguistic methods for analysing texts” (Hyon 1996: 694) and adopts humanist, social and cultural approaches (Byram 2000).

The Australian genre theory centres around Systemic Functional Linguistics developed mainly by Halliday (1985), where language is systemic and language choices are made through systems of language functions for the realisation of meanings. This theory is based on the notion of register determined by the three variables, field (the activity going on), tenor (relationship between the people involved) and mode (the channel of communication). In order to explain what qualifies a text as genre, Hasan (1989) claims that a text, any instance of language that plays some part or function in a context of situation in the form of social exchange of meanings, must possess certain elements/events/moves, obligatory and optional, that are essential to the structure of that particular text embedded within the contextual configuration (CC), a specific set of values that defines field (nature of the social activity), tenor (who are taking part in the social activity) and mode (what medium is the language used in and is that language constitutive or ancillary, phonic or graphic, spoken or written). The obligatory elements are the essence of a text and they constitute a genre. Along with these obligatory elements, one may find optional elements too. Texts that have the regular obligatory elements within their structure with standardised conventions are most likely to belong to the same genre. In other words, a genre is ‘a class of communicative events’ (such as

texts) that possess recognisable patterns, elements, text organisation and structuring with distinctive communicative functions.

This study looks at essays written by students more from a social approach, particularly from the ESP genre perspective with some elements of the New Rhetoric and Systemic Functional Linguistics approaches. Hence, the approach used is to some extent eclectic. For example, the functional labels used for the analytical models, naming of the categories of essay topics and identification of the fields and sub-fields of the topics follow the Systemic Functional Linguistics tradition. Then, some tenets of the New Rhetoric approach is followed in seeking contextual information regarding the production of the texts and how the discourse community perceives them. However, since the main purpose of the study is to look closely into the variations and relationships of the structural features of essays written for the English literature and language classes it predominantly takes up genre analysis based on Swalesian Move analysis. More details on my choice of Move analysis are in section 5.3.1.

2.4.1 The university essay as a genre

Ignorance of genre knowledge can lead to malfunctioning in the use of language and hinder effective participation (Allison 1999). Numerous research studies have been conducted on genre analysis of several types of texts/genre to see and understand how they function in terms of their rhetorical organisation and linguistic features and also use that knowledge for pedagogic purposes by raising awareness of learners and users of that genre, like:

- discussion sections in articles and dissertations (Hopkins and Dudley-Evans 1988)
- introduction section of research articles (Swales 1990, 2004)
- argumentative essay (Hyland 1990, Coffin et al. 2003)
- essay introductions and conclusions (Kusel 1992, Henry and Roseberry 1997, 1999)
- sales letters, legal documents (Bhatia 1993)
- lecture introductions (Thompson 1994)
- result section of sociology articles (Brett 1994)
- student text (Paltridge 1995, 2001)
- research article discussion sections (Holmes 1997)
- journal articles (Wharton 1999)
- M.Phil/PhD dissertation/thesis (Thompson 1999, Paltridge 2002, Swales 2004)
- letter of application (Henry and Roseberry 2001)
- dissertation acknowledgements (Hyland 2004a)
- TWE essays (Matsuzono 2004)
- postgraduate research papers (Samraj 2004)
- Ph.D. defense (Swales 2004)
- English First Year Term paper Introductions and Conclusions (Huttner 2005)
- literature reviews in Ph.D. theses of applied linguistics (Kwan 2006) etc.

All these studies show how commonality exist within a cluster of texts belonging to the same genre. The analysts explore the patterns and moves in a text and see how the text

moves in order to achieve its goals and by doing that dispense the knowledge and skills necessary to learners and users to perform better in the particular genre (Paltridge 2004).

Examples of easily recognisable and established genre are recipes, obituaries, medical prescriptions, weather reports etc. However, there are also some texts that are not readily accepted as genres. 'Essay' falls under that 'fuzzy' category because of its lack of standardised conventions and its wide range of varieties. Henry and Roseberry (1997) belong to that camp of observers who point out that essays should not be considered as genre but as expository text type as they include a wide range of texts from feature articles in newspapers, management textbooks to undergraduate essays and they all have the same 'general purpose' of putting forward a point of view and either defending it or explaining it (p. 480) whereas the 'communicative purpose' of the essays, which is a more specified category, is different for different cases. They suggest that the communicative purpose of the feature article is to make a particular topic attractive and present information in an interesting way whereas the communicative purpose of the undergraduate essay is to demonstrate understanding of a body of knowledge for the purpose of assessment. That may be true in the case of using the concept of 'essay' alone as a genre, but what about 'student essays'? From Paltridge's (1996) list of texts (Table 2.2) with their functions, student essay is classified as genre:

Genres	Text type
Recipe	Procedure
Personal letter	Anecdote
Advertisement	Description
Police report	Description
Student essay	Exposition
Formal letter	Exposition
Format letter	Problem-solution
News item	Recount
Health brochure	Procedure
Student assignment	Recount
Biology textbook	Report
Film review	Review

Table 2.2: List of texts as genre with their functions (Source: Paltridge 1996: 239)

Paltridge in 1996 classifies the ‘student essay’ as genre and equates it with ‘exposition’ as text type. However, my research will later show that this apparent match may not be so exact. In 1996, Paltridge tends to describe the student essay from a SFL perspective. By 2006, he gives a more community based Swalesian argument, a completely different reason as to why he calls an academic essay a genre. He no longer associates it predominantly with text type, but now also considers communicative purpose in context. In a colloquium presentation, Paltridge (Johns et al. 2006: 235) asserts that academic essays are examples of genre. He claims:

It [students’ academic essay] is a socially approved way in which students show what they know, what they can do, and what they have learned in the course of study. In drafting their essays, writers use language in particular ways according to the aim and purpose of the genre and the relationship between the writer and the audience. The way writers use language in a genre also depends on the expectations of the context in which the genre is produced.

Adding to that, he acknowledges that every instance of the same genre does not necessarily have to be the same, because they may vary in terms of the community requirements and the values of the expert members differing from context to context. In the same way, existence of variations within a single genre was also observed by Samraj (2004) in her study of evaluated postgraduate research papers from two different courses in environmental science. The reasons for these variations may not only be due to communicative purpose and overall organisation but also due to the roles/persona students adopt in their paper, the kind of tutor preferences, the kind of tasks set by the tutors and so on (Samraj 2002, 2004, Johns et al 2006). The same idea is reiterated in a study by Odell (1980) where he reports that tutors should give instructions in the conceptual ideas and heuristic procedures needed for the written task so that students can become familiar with the ways of thinking of the disciplinary communities and understand, “What does it mean to learn history? What does one have to do in order to think and write like a biologist?...” (p.49).

In that case, it is only natural that essays as genre will possess variations based on their contexts and purposes. Since the overall purpose of assessment and display of knowledge is common to all students' essays we can safely term them as genre. However, within this genre there may also be more specialist genres at a deeper level and it is essential to realise which they might be within a particular discourse community. From that concern, I am looking at students' essays produced in the contexts of the language and literature courses in the First year of the English

Department at Dhaka University. I have already made a claim that students' essays can be seen as genre. However, in the next section I will explain that at a more delicate level of analysis how the language and literature essays can be seen as distinct although related genres.

2.4.2 Dhaka University English Department language and literature essays as genres

My students are First year English Department students studying a specific humanities discipline, English Literature. They are required to write essays for their tutors to display knowledge that they have attained for the purpose of being evaluated in a fashion that is suitable for their discipline. The essays are written for two different contexts, i) for a general English Language course and, ii) for English Literature courses. In both cases, students have the general purpose of putting forward a point of view about a topic and defending it, and a specific purpose of demonstrating how well they understand the body of knowledge and convey that information in a manner/structure that is suitable only to that particular academic discourse community and using language, specialist language, required within the discourse community.

This study will, thus, attempt to identify the types of literature and language essays which the students are required to produce. With that view in mind, analysis of marked essays written under timed conditions will be conducted from the perspective of Swalesian genre analysis to identify the obligatory and optional moves required in both the contexts. Moreover, this study will not limit itself to the text analysis. It will go

beyond the page and explore the perceptions of the members of the discourse community to get a better understanding of what students are writing and why.

All this discussion points to one fact that whereas using an umbrella term of 'genre' for 'essays' or even 'student essays' can give us a sense of what that means (the former being long pieces of writing with a wide range of text types and the latter being extended pieces produced by students for assessment purposes), when they are studied closely they demonstrate enough variations to be considered separate genres. Hence, I feel that the 'English literature' essay in Dhaka University is a 'genre' which is very different from the Dhaka University 'English language' essay genre.

Identification of obligatory and optional moves could potentially provide some valid guidelines to structure literature and language essays appropriately. It is very important for both students and teachers to have a clear knowledge of the conventions practised in their institution because that will enable them to have a clear understanding of the genre which is so crucial to the educational context. It is on the basis of this that students will display their knowledge and teachers will judge their performance.

2.5 Conclusion

From the review of previous literature on different avenues of students' writing, it is clear that most of the existing studies concentrate on Western contexts. Even if some research has been conducted on Asian contexts they are limited to developed economies. Hence, more research on developing economies needs to be conducted, particularly in

NNS discipline specific writing as distinct from general academic English writing. This study, thus, attempts to do just that by looking at Bangladeshi students writing of English literature and English language essays at the university entrance level in Bangladesh where English is not their mother tongue but is the medium of instruction. And this scenario is very common around the world. The study does not claim that its findings are generalisable in all settings but they may be seen to be transferable in many contexts where writing of essays are done under timed conditions, in large classrooms, in EFL situations, to discipline specific students and with logistic constraints.

CHAPTER 3: OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The chapter begins with a brief description of the setting and an outline of the research questions followed by a description and summary of the data collection tools. It finally discusses the choices for qualitative inquiry and the tradition and methods it adopts for data analysis to investigate First year students' English essay writing and find out whether/how there exists any relationship between the general language essays and literature essays. As a reminder, it needs to be mentioned that this chapter only begins to orient the reader regarding the data collecting tools and analysis methods. Detailed discussion of each tool, the participants and the analysis of the data is presented in the specific analysis chapters, that is, chapters 4, 6, 7 and 8.

3.1 The study and the research questions

The study is exploratory and descriptive in nature and aims to investigate First year students' English essays written for their English language (Eng 101) and literature courses (Eng 103, 104, 105) in order to gain a finer understanding of what students write and what could be done, if necessary, to form a better relationship between the two types of writing, so that students can handle their essays competently, particularly English literature essays because most of their courses deal with English literature.

I, therefore, pursued this study aiming to answer the following research questions:

- 1) What types of topics/questions, in terms of fields and functions are set for the general English language essays and English literature essays?
- 2) How are the language and literature essays organised in terms of genre and moves respectively?
- 3) What are the perceptions of the students and the teachers regarding the language and literature essays?
- 4) How does what students say they value in essay writing relate to what they say they write?
- 5) How does what teachers say they value in essay writing relate to the claims about how they assess the work?
- 6) What is the relationship between the two types of writing?

Research Question 1 was answered by analysing field and subfield, the rhetorical function, information source and object of inquiry of the essay topics for each type (Chapter 4). For Question 2 move-based analysis was applied on the student essays (Chapters 5 and 6). Questions 3, 4 and 5 were answered by conducting a questionnaire survey and semi-structured interviews with students and only the latter with teachers (Chapters 7 and 8). Finally, findings from the answers of 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 collectively were used to answer Question 6 (Chapter 9).

3.2 A qualitative study

This qualitative study adopts a naturalistic interpretive approach to gain multiple perspectives which acknowledges a paradigmatic belief that reality is “pluralistic” (Richards 2003: 39) and is socially constructed or co-constructed by individuals interacting with the world.

Answering the social phenomenon of why students’ essay writing get shaped the way they are through various coordinated activities is a question best answered using a qualitative approach. It is essential to see from the analysis of the multi-angled data whether the major categories or patterns that emerge are consistent and run across all the data sets. The next section discusses the research tradition adopted for this qualitative study.

3.2.1 Genre analysis of written texts in liaison with other methods

Genre analysis is a dominant approach to text and discourse analysis specially situated within discipline specific environments. As will be discussed in Chapter 5, sections 5.3.1 and 5.3.1.1, various exponents of genre analysis have brought different insights into the way writers write and organise their texts within their community, the strategical choices they take to produce their text in accordance with the communicative purposes, what expectations do the readers have of the writers and which linguistic and stylistic features are used by the writers to execute their intentions. As my study looks in detail into the structural organisation of the essays, I have found several studies (Swales 1990, Hyland 1990, Bhatia 1993 and Dudley-Evans’ 1994, Labov 1972, Derewianka’s

1990 Recount and Hoey's 1983) very fruitful in analysing my students' essays. The move-based approaches are widely used to identify not only general patterns within particular genre but also variations to the expected patterns.

The present study undertakes to include information from the members of the discourse community to gain extra insights into the texts studied. Nesi et al. (2005) in their study, 'An investigation of genres of assessed writing in British Higher Education', claim that linguistic analysis cannot be carried out 'in a vacuum' and add that practical information gathered from tutors and students play crucial roles in clarifying issues between contextual and linguistic sources. The questionnaire survey and interviews that I conduct with students and teachers provide me with the contextual knowledge of the genre production. Bhatia (1993, 1997, 2002, 2004) informs one can learn more about the text and gain knowledge of its genre through specialist reactions and explanations. Professionals and academics with specialist knowledge and belonging to the discourse community can confirm findings from text analysis and bring greater validity. Bhatia (1993) considered the actual authors of the text as belonging to the category of specialist informants. Although my student authors were novice writers they now belonged to the context and in terms of Bhatia were specialists, and so getting their views was essential in understanding into why they wrote the way they did.

In trying to make meaning of the structure of the essays, I have added humanistic dimensions to my text analysis. According to Edge and Richards (1998), the naturalistic paradigm acknowledges the presence of multiple versions of reality depending on the

context it belongs to. The social phenomenon of students' essay writing and why they get shaped the way they are can be understood fully only when it is studied through multiple perspectives. It is, therefore, necessary to collectively look at the products, participants and their practices to get a better picture of the situation and gain a heightened understanding as we go along the process of what is valued within this shared discourse community. For this reason, a number of research instruments were used to collect data for exploring this qualitative study.

3.3 Data collection and approach to analysis

In order to get answers to the above multifaceted questions in section 3.1, data were gathered from various sources. Existing literature on interviews within case study context (Gillham 2000) has supported the use of multimethod data collection tools because they can shed light on the relationships between beliefs, opinions, knowledge and actual behaviour which is believed to be neither that transparent nor "straightforward" (p.93). This multimethod approach to collecting data helps in providing a rigorous understanding and rich account of the area under study (Flick 1998), or in the words of Edge and Richards (1998: 349), "rigorous attempt to present specific inside stories".

Data were collected in several stages from different sources from December 2005-December 2007. Tables 3.1 (a, b, c) provide a summary of the data collection tools collected from the essay prompts, essays, student questionnaire and interviews with students and teachers.

Essay text data

	Type	Number	Sources
1 st Yr. Essay Topics	Eng. Lang. E 101	57	1 st Yr. Eng. Lang Final Exam Paper and timed tutorial task
	Eng. Lit. E103,104,105	167	1 st Yr. Eng. Lit. Final Exam Paper & timed tutorial task
1 st Yr. Essays	Eng. Lang	60	1 st Yr. Marked, timed Tutorial/ Exam. Scripts
	Eng. Lit. E103,104,105	40	1 st Yr. Marked, timed Tutorial/ Exam. Scripts

Table 3.1(a): Data collected through essay topics and essays

Data collected through interaction with students

Type	No. of Participants	Source
Pre-Interview Questionnaire	99	1 st Year
Interview	6	1 st Year
	2	2 nd Year
	2	3 rd Year
Follow-up Interview	4	1 st Year
	1	2 nd Year
	1	3 rd Year

Table 3.1(b): Data collected through interaction with students

Data collected through interaction with teachers

Type		No. of Participants	Source
Interview	Pilot	1	Warwick uni CELTE student
	Main	8	DU faculty of Eng dept
	Follow-up	7	DU faculty of Eng dept

Table 3.1(c): Data collected through interaction with teachers

Tables 3.1: Overview of data collection tools and sources

Ethical issues regarding consent, honesty and confidentiality were considered for this study. As I am an insider to the research context, I had no problem accessing consent from the Chairperson the Department and faculty members. They willingly agreed to be interviewed and provide all other help.

My initial contact with student participants in my First year PhD programme (2005) was done by email through the student advisers of the Department. They contacted student volunteers to submit their marked essays explaining why they would be used, which were then sent to me after photocopying and returning the originals to the respective authors. Later, during my main data collection phase (2006) in Dhaka, I posted a notice (Appendix 1) on the First Year notice board, after seeking permission from the Chairperson of the Department, requesting students to participate in my research by submitting their marked essays again, give interviews and answer a questionnaire. All identification from the marked essays submitted was removed during typing for the purpose of anonymity. The students interviewed were selected by me from those who volunteered to give the interviews. The students and teachers interviewed are identified by numbers, as S1/T1, in this study to avoid being identified later once I returned and showed them my work. Honest representation in terms of what students and teachers said and the variations they brought about in their opinions has been attempted through a thick description of the data. Details on student-teacher selection and profile will be presented in Chapters 7 and 8.

The next sections will describe the different data collection tools and the participants of this study followed by the analytical procedures at the end of each section.

3.3.1 Essay topics

Data from documents are produced not for research purposes but for real-life situations. They are therefore "artifacts" (as termed by Goetz and Le Compte 1984:153) or "symbolic records kept by or on participants in a social group". They are ready-made existing data available for analysis. This is true of the essays as well as the essay prompts. For my research purposes the existing available document data were examination papers and student written work. The authenticity, accuracy, reliability of the documents can be tested, triangulated and determined by other data collection methods. Since my data, the essay topic and essays were not produced for research purposes, I knew looking at them would provide me with representative data because they were my main focus of research. So whatever I would see in them would provide me with insights that would provide a start in answering my research questions.

General English Language essay topics were collected mainly from Year ending English Language questions papers, and some from tutorial tasks. In addition to those, mainstream English Literature Essay Topics were collected from Year ending questions papers of Courses Eng 103, 104 and 105 and tutorial essay questions that students are made to write for their tutorial class tests. Using them for this study was not a problem as they are considered public domain.

The essay topics were analysed with reference to an SFL approach. I looked at the field and subfield, the rhetorical function, information source and object of inquiry of the essay topics from both the contexts. Categories of the question types were developed to work as a groundwork for studying the student essays and seeing the relationship between what is asked for and what is produced. Detailed analysis is presented in Chapter 4.

3.3.2 Essays

The essays¹⁰ for the text analysis part of the study were produced by First year students for timed examination conditions.

These essays were, therefore, not produced for any research purposes. They are genuine and authentic materials mainly produced for testing students' proficiency and knowledge. Students readily submitted their marked scripts which I returned to the respective authors after photocopying them. Since all these essays were handwritten they had to be typed ditto (unedited) before analysing them.

The essays were all collected from timed exam settings. Students are assigned different tutorial groups alongside the main courses in the First Year where they write extended essays. These essays have been marked by teachers responsible for their tutorials.

¹⁰ *Although I collected the topics from the question papers and tutorial tasks, the written essays were however collected from tutorials where similar topics are practised and where teachers do not make a fuss about the length of the essay allowing students to finish writing one essay in 50 minutes time (one class duration).*

Essays were classified under two major categories on rank order as high and low grade essays.

The language and literature essays were analysed on the basis of Move-Strategy structure to see what structural patterns the essays possess and what tactical choices student take to express the moves and what students were presenting in terms of content matter within those moves. Initial analysis was done with different sets of move labels (Appendix 9) which gradually improved with further reading from the literature and multiple analyses. Model development was attempted after several stages of text analysis using different studies and adapting what suited the essays best (Chapter 5). The analyses try to show how some students are able to handle essay structure well while others cannot. Detailed analysis of students texts is presented in Chapter 6.

3.3.3 Pre-interview questionnaire

I decided to conduct a questionnaire survey before doing the interviews with the students. I used one of my colleagues' 50-minute lecture time with 99 First Year students and distributed a questionnaire with 17 open ended questions on writing (Appendix 16). It was the best way of getting all the students together.

My main purpose of getting these brief responses was to have some general idea from a larger sample about students' views on their writing and the writing tasks they did and also identify which questions were more applicable to my study, so that I could make further focused enquiries and gather more detailed information on those during the

interviews that I would conduct with students and teachers. Hence, these responses acted as a protocol for the interviews and which I also used to cross check my findings from the essay analysis.

Pre-interview questionnaire analysis was done after reading the content of the responses and grouping them in summarised forms under topics that were directly related with the research aims. All 17 questions were not used, but the information that were relevant to the research aims were carefully selected and primarily organised under six topics. The findings of Pre-interview Questionnaire (PIQ) data are presented in Chapter 7 (7.1).

3.3.4 Interviews

Interviewing is one of the common means among the several research methods used in qualitative studies, and is also seen as one of the most powerful ways of understanding others and gaining authentic insight into people's experiences (Punch 1998). Interviews allow the researcher to further probe for clarification. It is a 'meaning making work' (Holstein and Gubrium 1995) or a jointly constructed event between the interviewer and the interviewee which involve more data generation rather than data collection (Baker 1997) in order to explore the issues concerned. Interviews can vary from highly unstructured to semi-structured to structured being "one-time, brief exchange, say five minutes over the telephone, or it can take place over multiple, lengthy sessions, sometimes spanning days, as in life-history interviewing" (Fontana and Frey 1994:361)

The interviews, with both students and teachers of the English department, were necessary to enable me to become aware of the intricate perceptions beyond externally observable data [essays]. Semi structured interviews were used as certain information was desired to confirm the responses received from students on the basis of the open ended questionnaire and also get fresh insights and new ideas that might emerge as a result of the probing and elaboration on the topic. Some information was already attained from the study of the written products and initial text analysis of the language and literature essays. So I was already familiar with the phenomena of First year students writing essays in the English department. On the basis of those ideas, I designed a set of semi-structured questions. I did not want to lose track with too many divergent viewpoints of students and be unable to make connections with the pieces of information.

The semi structured questions aimed at finding different types of information. They were mainly experience/behaviour questions, opinion/value questions, feeling questions, knowledge questions and background questions (Merrium 1988). Follow-up interviews were also carried out to probe on oversimplified responses and missing information from the main interviews (Rubin and Rubin 2005).

3.3.4.1 Student interviews

3.3.4.1.1 Main interviews

10 English Department students from (1st, 2nd and 3rd years) were interviewed about the choices they make and made while writing the essays. Although all these students attained good grades in their secondary and higher secondary examinations (see section 7.2.1 for students' profile), they were all not performing equally well at the university. This was evident from their present performance and from their interviews. As a result, I was able to get views across all ranges: very good students, mediocre ones as well as the weaker ones. These interviews based on the same pre-interview questionnaire helped me probe into what they wrote and why they wrote that way and also why they thought this was expected of them. The set of 17 pre-interview questions were again used. Since the questionnaire responses were mainly Yes-No and brief responses the interviews enabled me to probe for detailed information.

With students it was necessary for me as an interviewer to talk a lot as students did not understand many of the questions being asked, and needed elaborate explanation, rephrasing, translating into L1. Each interview lasted for an hour at least which were audio taped. Students were given the option of using L1/L2. Although students were given this option, they mostly spoke in English, most probably because in the class we encouraged and expected students to use English. Since they saw me as a teacher of the Department (though I was not directly teaching them) they felt comfortable using L2. Some of the students did use both in *Bangla* and English. The *Bangla* parts were translated and italicised for transcription.

3.3.4.1.2 Follow up interviews

Follow up interviews during the main data collection stage with 6 students were also conducted after the initial coding of the main interviews. Only 1 follow up interview was audio taped while the all the rest were conducted by taking notes.

3.3.4.2 Teacher interviews

3.3.4.2.1 Pilot interview

One interview with a PhD student at CAL (formerly CELTE) from EFL teaching-learning context who taught at the university level was interviewed as a trial for the main interviews to be conducted in Bangladesh and design the interview questions. The interview was based on my research aims and lasted for about 30 minutes and was audio taped. It helped me develop and sequence the questions. It was transcribed and analysed as the pilot interviewee's context was similar to mine and I could see that the questions tested out were working well with the kind of information I was looking for. However, the answers were not considered part of data for the study. I designed my semi-structured Teacher Interview questions on the basis of this interview. This interview did not have any follow ups.

3.3.4.2.2 Main interviews

Based on the pilot interview and my research questions I prepared an interview guide for myself and a set of interview questions as well. I did not follow the guide that strictly as it was actually meant for me to keep things in mind in case I forgot something.

8 faculty members teaching language and literature courses in the English department of Dhaka University were interviewed to find out what they think students ought to practise and what they value as important in students' essay writing, why they gave the grade they did to the scripts. Two teachers were shown the initial analysis of the students' English literature essays and were asked which they considered as good and weak essays and why they thought so. These interviews lasted between 40-60 minutes and were audio taped.

The interview structure differed from one another according to the relationship with my teacher interviewees. Some interviews ran for longer times as we spoke a lot more than necessary in a casual and relaxed environment. These interviews were informally conducted and did not follow any sequence of questions. I showed them my guide and gave a rough idea about the study and they preferred to talk on the issues they felt I needed to know. I, nevertheless, did ask them some specific questions from my guide so as to keep the focus of my research questions intact. I preferred to use the interview questions with senior teachers and with those who were pressed with time because I did not want to waste time and picked on the specific questions.

3.3.4.2.3 Follow up interviews

7 follow up interviews were conducted during the main stage of data collection. Only 2 follow up interviews were audio taped, while notes were taken down for the other 5. In most of the follow ups teachers were shown the analysed essays and were asked to

comment on them. During the last phase of data collection very focused structured follow ups (Appendix 18) were undertaken to provide very specific information that remained unexplored during the main stage and which were identified during the interview analysis phase.

The interviews were analysed manually identifying categories and through semi-inductive analysis. However, before arriving at categories, initial labelling was done “to generate a set of labels” (Richards 2003: 273) several times with the same interviews. The categories tended to be both pre-existing that I brought with me from my findings of the initial text analysis and my position as an insider, but the sub-categories mainly emerged from the data. Detailed interview data (for both students and teachers) analytical procedure is presented in Chapter 7 (7.2.2). The interview findings are made separately for students and teachers in Chapters 7 and 8 respectively.

3.4 Conclusion

So far this chapter has outlined the research design and methodology adopted for this study. The data findings along with development of the text analysis models will be presented in chapters 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8. Chapter 9 will attempt to pull together all the data findings from the various sources- topic, text, questionnaire and interview analyses to understand better the relationship between the essays written in the general English language class and the English literature classes in the English Department of Dhaka University in Bangladesh.

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSING ESSAY TOPICS

4.0 Introduction

Before analysing texts, it is important to have an understanding of the nature of the tasks/topics/questions that students are required to write. This chapter, hence, analyses essay questions/topics/essay examination prompts to find out, in terms of question variety, what type of questions students of English are mostly required to answer. In addition to that, it also aims to see how the question patterns, instructions and wordings given in the questions/topics could help students write what they are asked for and not receive answers to questions that do not exist.

4.1 Previous research on examining essay topics

Different studies (Johns 1976, Howe 1978, Johns 1979 cited in Swales 1982, Swales 1982, Brossell 1983, Rose 1983, Horowitz 1986a/b, Matsuzono 2004, Moore and Morton 2005) have attempted to show what students are asked to write in various disciplines by studying the essay questions /topics. These analyses have been carried out from different perspectives by different researchers. The main areas studied for analysing the essay questions are the instructional verbs (Swales 1982, Matsuzono 2004,) information load (Brossell 1983), the typology (Horowitz 1986a), field level topic clarification (Matsuzono 2004), genre, information source, rhetorical function and object of enquiry (Moore and Morton 2005).

Wordings in a question can be very significant because they act as the point of stimulus from which writers can begin to develop their ideas and remain focused in the text produced. Studies by Johns, C.M., Johns, T.F. and Howe, P. (cited in Swales 1982) have emphasised the significance of the instructional verbs used in the questions because they can point out to a writer what is expected of them. As indicated in Johns' (1976 cited in Swales 1982) unpublished class handout, instructional verbs operate as primary and secondary instructions in interpreting a question/topic, an approach also taken up by Johns (1979 cited in Swales 1982). For example:

Instruction	Question/ topic
<i>Primary</i>	<i>Discuss</i> the relative merits of two extraction processes,
<i>Secondary</i>	<i>from the point of view</i> of economy of material, and strength and uniformity of the finished product.

Table 4.1: Example of Primary and Secondary instructions
(Source: Swales 1982:11)

Although Swales (1982) recognised the importance of the instructional verbs, his approach varied a little as he identified some disadvantages. He felt that there was “a tendency to identify primary with central and secondary with incidental or supportive” (p.15) and this was not the case with all questions. In some questions the second part was more important than the first part. The following example: ‘Draw a labelled diagram of a Geiger-Muller tube, describing how it functions’ was cited by him to prove the point. He preferred to use the terms ‘Opening’ and ‘Ensuing’ instead. The other drawback he found was that these instructional verbs did not always perform the same function and could “lead to misleading results” (p.15). As a result, the best approach for Swales to analyse topics was to look at instructional verbs with their possible complements because the “full question-context is sometimes needed in order to make

appropriate categorisation” (p.17), and accordingly he came up with seven categories of question types in his study which were ‘Describe’ ‘Define’, ‘Explain’, ‘Draw’, ‘Discuss and Compare’, ‘Calculate’ and ‘List’.

Like Swales, Matsuzono (2004) in his study of TWE topics agrees that topic clarification could begin initially by looking at the primary and secondary instructions with special attention paid to the proposition that appeared in most of the topics. With TWE topics this is not a problem as the questions have a very consistent pattern. The following example will display that:

Factors	TWE Question/ topic
Proposition	People attend college or university for many reasons (for example, new experiences, career preparation, increased knowledge).
<i>Primary Instruction</i>	<i>Why do you think people attend college or university?</i>
<i>Secondary Instruction</i>	<i>Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.</i>

Table 4.2: Example of the three factors necessary in TWE topics
(Source: Matsuzono 2004)

Horowitz (1986a) also studied instructional verbs in his study with 284 essay examination prompts, however, from a more critical perspective. He felt that if uniformity was not maintained in their usage, it would become problematic for the students. Instead of just the instructional verbs he included the ‘organisational markers’ or the ‘prompt frames’ and grouped them under one category which were “judged to have performed equivalent or nearly equivalent functions within the context of the complete prompt” (p. 108). Questions beginning with ‘prompt frames’ a) Define....., b)

Give a definition of and , c) What is....? have different instructional verbs but they served the same function. They all required the student to write a definition essay. Instead of seeing them as instructional verbs Horowitz thought it better to treat them as organisational markers. So, Horowitz (1986a : 110) came up with a set of typologies and classified the essay question prompts on the basis of four broad categories that displayed familiarity with concepts (definition, physical description etc.), between/among concepts (similarities and differences, cause and result etc.), with a process (narration) and, with argumentation (general argument, critical thinking etc.)

Horowitz (1986b) in another study, classified another set of seven categories by looking at 54 university assignments from the perspective of the type of information sources needed in preparing the task of 17 departments in an American state university. They were: 1) summary/reaction to reading, 2) annotated bibliography, 3) report on a specific participatory experience, 4) connection of theory and data, 5) case study, 6) synthesis of multiple sources and 7) research project. The categories reveal that students at the university were involved in tasks like project essays or long assignments that required them to do a lot of research. This was akin to Moore and Morton's (2005) study of university assignments of two Australian universities against IELTS Task 2 essays which were timed examination essays or source-text free writing and their probe into the nature of topic using 'object of inquiry'.

Moore and Morton (2005) analysed the rubrics for writing tasks from two academic contexts from the perspectives of genre, information source, rhetorical function and

object of enquiry and showed how different one was from the other. They found that most of the university assignments were essays that tended to use more secondary sources than primary sources and prior knowledge. They also found that university assignments from humanities and social science disciplines depended more on theoretical information whereas more research oriented disciplines required students to collect data and interpret that. In contrast, the IELTS tasks were all only essays with a question or proposition followed by a prompt, asking students to present an argument in favour of or against the proposition. They required only “prior knowledge” or “writer’s pre-existing knowledge, experience, beliefs, intuitions and the like” (p.52) and as a result tend to be “anecdotal” (p.54) because the purpose of the task was to test students’ linguistic proficiency. This study generated another important finding with regards to the rhetorical function. The university assignments were seen to be either “analytical” or “practical” (p.56), the former being more frequent and belonging to pure disciplines than the latter to applied disciplines. Moore and Morton (2005) also observed that differences between topics/tasks occurred regarding their ‘object of enquiry’, some requiring concrete information (that is, real world events, actions, processes, practices) and other abstract information (that is, abstract entities of ideas, theories, laws). They termed these phenomenal and metaphenomenal respectively. It was found in their study that the object of enquiry of the university corpus were more phenomenal, in contrast to the IELTS corpus where all the tasks belonged to the phenomenal category.

For the purpose of my study, Morton and Moore’s findings have been very useful because my study, too, compares and contrasts topics that are set for two different

courses and I have been able to make connections to what they reveal about source-text free writing in contrast to source-text dependent writing.

Essay topics can also be analysed from the perspective of “field” which according to Derewianka (1990: 18) is the “subject matter of the text” and one of the main factors responsible for determining the register of the text. Matsuzono’s study (2004) valued field level topic clarification as this identification allows students to be aware of the type of topics (content matter) they can be expected to write on. From a study of 185 TWE essay topics he identified 27 main fields and their consecutive subfields. The researcher established the criterion for choosing the TWE sample essays for analysis on the basis of the most frequent field-subfield level topic identification. As mentioned earlier this can be a helpful guiding tool for students in understanding what kind of topics they can expect to get in their examinations. I have found this approach very useful in identifying the areas that most frequently come in the essay topics/questions.

In summary, this above discussion has concentrated on the different available ways by which essay question/topic types set for students can be analysed. The following section will show how my study focuses on the different essay questions/topics that are provided to the First Year English major students in the Dhaka University in the two contexts 1) English Language and, 2) English Literature courses.

4.2 Topic analysis within the present study

Since the main purpose of my study is to look into students' essay writing, it is necessary to also analyse the questions/topics they are made to write on which relates to Research Question 1 (Chapter 3). Hence, by analysing the essay topics I am interested in finding out:

- 1) which topics in terms of field and sub-field are considered important.
- 2) what type of writing, in terms of rhetorical function, is expected of the students on the basis of the questions/topics/prompts.
- 3) what relationships can be found between what is asked in the question and what the students tend to produce.
- 4) whether there is a relationship between the topic/prompt and the organisational structure of the texts that students typically produce.

Objectives 3 and 4, however, are not answerable by topic analysis alone and are signals that lead to analysis of students' texts. For the purpose of the present study, both language and literature essay topics were analysed from a combined perspective to arrive at complete meaning. Firstly, field and sub-field of the topics were looked at to identify which ones students had to write on more. Secondly, it was necessary to find which rhetorical function(s) was/were required to complete the essay. This latter was done by studying the instructional verbs, the object of enquiry and the kind of information source that was required to complete the tasks.

4.2.1 Analysing English language essay topics

57 English language essay topics (Appendix 2) were collected from the past English language final year question papers and from the essay writing tasks given by teachers in the tutorial classes.

4.2.1.1 Analysing field-subfield of language topics

The cross-curricular nature of fields, the subject matter of the topic, can be categorised as main fields and their sub-fields. Amongst the 57 topics, those concerned with places occur most frequently. For instance, different aspects of Bangladesh and Dhaka University occupied the highest number (15 and 7 respectively, see Table 4.3 and Appendix 3 for categorisation¹¹). ‘Bangladesh’ is a country and ‘Dhaka University’ is an educational institution and they have been categorised as specific fields of ‘place’, because of their frequent occurrences within FC 2 essay topics and also because the prompts in these two ‘Place’ fields contain the very proper nouns representing them, that is, ‘Bangladesh’ and ‘Dhaka University’. Many topics associated with different aspects of Bangladesh, like its politics, women, festivals, historical days and so on are being asked to be written about. The two subfields within the Bangladesh main field are ‘events/culture’ and ‘problem aspects’. Similarly, ‘Dhaka University’ is another important ‘Place’ main field with different issues as its subfields: ‘Problems of Dhaka University’, ‘Dhaka University as an institution’, ‘Life in Dhaka University’. A third specific ‘Place’ main field is identified where characteristics of places with specific

¹¹ Due to word limitation also in the Appendices, only selective representation of the analyses is presented for all the categorisation from hence-forth

nouns (*in italics*) like ‘life in the *city*’ are to be described. A fourth general ‘Place’ main field is concerned with general qualities of places without any specific nouns of places mentioned.

The second main field in the language topics is about ‘People: Self’, specially when students are required to describe things about themselves. The other second main field is ‘People: Others’ where the writer is required to describe things about other people. The third field is ‘Education’ which is concerned with different learning styles. The different main fields with their subfields are shown in the following table. See Appendix 3 for a sample representation of the analysis.

Main field	Subfield	Frequency
1. a) Place: Bangladesh	- Festivals/Events/Culture	11
b) Place: Dhaka Uni.	- Problem aspects	4
	- Problems of Dhaka University	3
	-Dhaka University as an	2
	institution	2
c) Place: specific	-Life in Dhaka University	2
d) Place: general	- qualities	3
	- qualities	
2. a) People: Self	- Likings/dislikings/experiences	8
	- Future Plans	3
b) People: Others	-qualities	4
	-action/behaviour/attitudes	4
3. Education	-learning style	4
	-problems	1
4. Environment		3
5. Media		3

Table 4.3: Main fields and subfields of English language topics

4.2.1.2 Analysing rhetorical purpose of language topics

Rhetorical function of a text refers to what it is attempting to do. Likewise, rhetorical purpose of topics/questions apply to what the task is instructing the students to do. It is important to keep in mind that essays do not always stick to a single rhetorical function and can have several according to what the essay is trying to answer, which is also revealed in Moore and Morton's study (2005).

An easy way of analysing the rhetorical purpose is by examining the instructional words. However, problems arise when instructions are not to be found as in the case of this study. It was surprisingly revealed from a study of 57 essay topics (Appendix 2) that 44 of them were merely titles with no instructions accompanying them ('The Popularity of Band Shows' or 'The Campus of Dhaka University'), 9 had partial instructions (like, 'Equal Rights of Women: Your views' or 'What you like or dislike about the University of Dhaka?'), 2 topics had a proposition followed by an instruction (e.g. 'Bengali should be the medium of education at the university level. Do you agree or disagree?'), and 2 topics had both primary/opening and secondary/ensuing instructions ('Do you think *hartals* should be banned? Give reasons for your answer.') and only 1 topic had a Proposition followed by opening and ensuing instructions ('Life today has become more complex than it was in the past. Do you agree? Use specific reasons and details to support your answer.'). As most of the essay titles have no instructions with them, it is left to the writer's discretion to handle the topic from whichever perspective he/she feels most appropriate. For example (Table 4.4), with a topic like 'The Popularity of Band

Shows’ a student in principle might pursue the topic from multiple perspectives like the following which according to White and Arndt (1991: 27) is a “mixed bag of functions”:

Functions	Handling of Topic
Description	Describe what are band shows
Explanation	Explain reasons for the popularity of band shows
Comparison	Compare band shows with any other popular musical show and show how they are similar or different
Analysis	Show how band shows can be a part of our culture and what role it plays in our society and with which group of people
Argumentation/Position -Reason	Discuss what points can be put for and against band shows and explain the reasons for taking that position

Table 4.4: Example of handling English language essay topics

The lone title itself does not inform the students which of the above functions the examiner might expect. Therefore, it becomes necessary to examine the texts that students produce and ask the students and teachers to find out if there are tendencies that might indicate tacit knowledge within the discourse community. In order to get another perspective on my categories I also asked a colleague of mine to categorise the question types. I undertook this process of counter-checking/ ‘peer-review’ (Gillham 2000) to increase the validity of my categorisation. She classified the topics broadly as being either Narrative, Descriptive, Explanatory or Argumentative. Being a language teacher, she opined that language essays were usually taught following that order. This coincided with what one of my other Teacher interviewees reported (8.2.2.4.1.i), which helped me with my categorisation. After her categorisation, I compared her categories with mine. It was found that we had very little differences. From the 57 English Language topics only one topic, ‘Equal Rights for Women’ was identified differently by us. I identified it

as Explanation and she as Argumentative. The other few differences occurred in the overlapping functions of each topic. For instance, I identified 'Changes I would like to see at my University' as Descriptive whereas she identified it as both Explanation-Description. I did not worry too much about this because my goal was to identify the primary nature of the questions and I was aware that a single topic may require the writer to use multiple rhetorical functions.

I decided that Narrative and Descriptive both belonged to topics that were very personal and experiential and made them into one category, that is, 'Description-Recount'. I did not want to use the term Argumentation as it encompassed different classifications within it (Coffin et al. 2003) and I could also see from the list of topics that some of the so-called 'Argumentative' topics required students to take a position very firmly from the beginning whereas some did not. As a result, I decided to categorise the former as 'Position-Reason' and the latter as 'Explanation'.

Finally, on analysing the 57 language topics (Appendix 2) I came up with the following rhetorical function categories--- '**Description-Recount**', '**Explanation**', and '**Position-Reason**' (Table 4.5 and Appendix 4).

From the frequency counts of essay topics, it is revealed that students for the language class are given essay topics that are mainly **Description-Recount** topics (34 out of 57). The **Description- Recount** category included topics that required the writer to describe different aspects like appearance, features, qualities or characteristics of a particular

phenomenon or person (Gerot 1995). Essays within this category can either be experiential descriptions or technical descriptions (Callaghan et al. 1993) which at times are like information reports (Derewianka 2003). This category also included topics that were like narratives or recounts which were identified by Derewianka (1990, 2003) as a genre subcategorised into personal, biographical, autobiographical, factual, historical, imaginative, where the writer simply reconstructs a past experience and writes about a sequence of events over a period of time. In my data of topics, the description and recount topics were found to be similar as both involved describing a series of events either with or without time sequence and, therefore, I grouped them under one category. Examples of this category are: 'My favourite Sport', 'Qualities of a Good Friend', 'Visit to an Interesting Place', 'What do you plan to do in the coming five years?'.

The second most frequently asked topic belongs to the **Explanation** category (16 out of 57). It was difficult to classify some of the **Explanation** topics (as mentioned earlier) because they seemed to overlap with **Description** and depended a lot on individual students' interpretation of the topic. These overlappings occur mainly because of the lack of any kind of instructions with the titles. The **Explanation** category requires the writer to explain why things are as they are and how things work or how phenomenon takes place which has been subcategorised as sequential, causal, factorial, consequential and exploration (Derewianka 2003). And as I already mentioned earlier this category did not explicitly require the writer to take a side. A problem I faced while classifying topics under this category was that most of them could also be very descriptive. Examples of

this type are: ‘Effects of TV advertisement on Children’, ‘Main Causes of Terrorism in Bangladesh’, ‘Equal Rights of Women: Your Views’.

The last and least frequently occurring topic type is **Position-Reason** (only 6 out of 57). This type has the function of persuasion and discussion/debate (Derewianka 2003) and has a more analytical approach in the sense that it requires the writer to take a stance against an established idea/truth/institution/issue and convince the reader through persuasion and justify his/her arguments. Examples of this category are: ‘Bengali should be the medium of education at the university. Do you agree?’, ‘Cable TV should be Censored’, ‘Private Universities in Bangladesh: Advantages and Disadvantages’. For sample analysis of categories see Appendix 4.

Function	Frequency count ¹²	Example
Description- Recount	34	‘The Campus of Dhaka University’ ‘An Afternoon at the <i>Boi Mela</i> ’
Explanation	15	‘Political Instability of Bangladesh’
Position-Reason	6	‘Bengali should be the medium of education at the university level. Do you agree or disagree?’

Table 4.5: English language essays and their functions

4.2.1.3 Analysing information source and object of enquiry of language topics

From the list of the essay topics it is evident that the topics are primarily related to either students’ own life experiences or general knowledge/current affairs for which students depend on their pre-existing knowledge for the source of information. The topics are mainly free writing type tasks where the writer is free to make decisions spontaneously

¹² Number of essays attributed primarily to this rhetorical expectation

and writes without any guidance. They do not require much in-depth analytical thinking and are phenomenal in nature in terms of their object of enquiry, as identified by Moore and Morton (2005).

The next section discusses the essay topics from the First year mainstream English literature courses.

4.2.2 Analysing English literature essay topics

Literature essay topics were collected from the First year final examination question papers of courses 'Introduction to Poetry', 'Introduction to Prose' and 'Introduction to Drama' (Appendix 5). The question papers include short and long essays which come in different sections.

From a study of 49 long literature essay topics and 118 short essay¹³ (for long-short essay classification see footnote 8 in Chapter 1) topics it was revealed that, unlike the language topics, the literature topics come with very detailed instructions. This indicates that, unlike the language essays, there is the possibility of the expected rhetorical function being made explicit. Analysis of students' writing will show whether, and in what ways, the potential clues tend to be picked up. The topics require an indepth analytical study for a complete understanding of them and eventual analysis of the texts.

¹³ Only for the purpose of analysing the topics of the literature essays based on the question paper I am terming the questions as long and short, and only in this chapter. After this chapter I will be referring to them as 'essays'

It was found that the instructions given and the use of the instructional verbs do not have any fixed pattern, like the IELTS or TWE essay writing topics. Some questions have primary and secondary instructional verbs, some have just primary ones, some begin with propositions or quotations, whereas some begin with wh-question words or Yes/No question words. Under such circumstances, it is very difficult to analyse the questions on the basis of a single classification. Hence, I focused on instructional verbs, question words, field, rhetorical function, information source and object of enquiry to have a clear understanding of what the question demands the writer to produce. A question might require the student to use all the different categories to understand the question fully or use any one or two of the appropriate categories as needed. For example, let us take the following question:

Q. Shakespeare in Sonnet 18, "Shall I compare.." and Donne in the poem "The Sun Rising" are considered unconventional. Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer.

Question Example 1¹⁴

There is a proposition about a comparative study between the two poets. The primary or Opening instruction, in form of a verbal question, asks students whether they agree or disagree with the proposition, followed by secondary or Ensuing instruction to list the reasons or arguments for the proposition. The field of the question is related to the two poets, Shakespeare and Donne. The question is, thus, a Position-Reason type question which is also comparative in nature.

¹⁴ Q-Ex 1

The next sections will look at analysing the questions mainly from the perspectives of field and subfields, instructional verbs, rhetorical function, information source and object of enquiry for both long and short literature essay topics.

4.2.2.1 Analysing Field-Subfield of literature topics

As done with the language essay titles, an examination of the literature questions was also done from the perspectives of field and subfield. An analysis of the content matter of the questions becomes essential for students to understand which areas of the text they should concentrate on more.

It was revealed from the analysis of the literature essay topics, both long and short, from the perspective of their field that they were all related to various aspects of the texts studied in class. The major Fields identified were questions on 'Themes' (internal human and social human) and 'Characterisation'. Within the 'internal human' and 'social human' theme types it was found that there seemed to be a basic difference in the questions. Students were mainly asked to reflect either on strongly psychological human experiences or on social phenomena in relationship to human experience respectively. The 'Characterisation' field questions dealt mainly with either single character analysis or study of characters in relationship with other characters. It was, however, not possible to separate the questions neatly into categories all the time because a number of them tended to belong to multiple categories, especially in terms of 'Themes' (Table 4.6). (Also see Appendix 6a and 6b for a sample representation of the analysis).

Main Field	Sub-field	Frequency (long-49)	Frequency (short- 118)
Characterisation	Women; Lovers; Comic characters; tragic heroes;	9	19
Themes→social human	Colonialism; Money vs marriage; Money; Life vs Art; Realism;	5	23
Themes→internal human	Psychological problems within families; Love; Death; Blindness; Disguise; Conflict; Disillusionment; Mystery; nostalgia Human world; Conflict; Nature; rural world, Eden like	14	45
Literary genres/forms	Novel; plot and action; comedy; catharsis	8	12
Literary figures	Metaphor; irony; hyperbole; allusion; mood; humour, diction	6	13
Writers	Sonneteer; comic novelist; love poet	4	2
Narrative techniques	Dramatic monologue	3	4

Table 4.6: Long & short literature essay topics' main fields and subfields

Examples:

Characterisation
Q. Both Portia and Raina are romantic heroines, but their attitude to life is very different. Do you agree? (LQ)

Q-Ex 2

Themes-social human
Q. Discuss Prufrock in Eliot's "Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" as a representative of the modern age. (SQ)
Themes-internal human
Q. Write an essay on the treatment of love in *The Merchant of Venice* and *Arms and the Man*. (LQ)

Q-Ex 3-4

Literary Forms
Q D.H. Lawrence calls the novel "The bright book of life." Does your reading of *Pride and Prejudice* and *The Financial Expert* bear out his assertion about the novel? (LQ)

Q-Ex 5

Identifying only the field of a topic is not enough for students to get the specific focus of the question, so another vital area to look into are the organisational markers. They help in identifying the rhetorical purpose of a question. The next sections will attempt to analyse the questions by looking at the organisational markers from different perspectives.

4.2.2.2 Analysing rhetorical purpose of instructional words from the perspective of Speech Act Theory and concept of performative language (Illocutionary force and perlocutionary effect)

It was necessary to see the instructions or organisational markers carefully because each instructional word in the question had something particular for the students to carry out in the essay. However, literature (Horowitz 1986a) has shown that these markers do not always function in straightforward manner and sometimes implications are hidden beneath the veneer of the surface question (Opening up questions <<http://pratt.edu/~wtc/opening.html>> retrieved on 1/11/2007). I used Austin's (1962) Speech Act Theory notions of Illocutionary force to analyse the purpose of the questions/topics and the idea of Perlocutionary forces to distinguish what the students actually do. It was found that in some questions the illocutionary force of the organisational markers has explicit indication of the desired perlocutionary effect as opposed to some others where there is implicit indication of the desired perlocutionary act. I will, therefore, look at the organisational markers from the following two perspectives: 1) where questions make it obvious to students which function they ask for

and 2) where questions do not clearly spell out the question setters’ intentions (explicit and implicit meanings).

4.2.2.2.1 Analysing rhetorical purpose from the perspective of illocutionary force and explicit indication of perlocutionary effect

Looking at the instructional verbs or organisational markers or commands is useful because they set out most explicitly on the paper what the student is supposed to do. For the initial analysis I listed all the instructional verbs/organisational markers of both short and long essay topics. A frequency count was done of the instructional words/organisational markers that were used most commonly in 49 long essay questions and 118 short essay questions. The following organisational markers were found in the language of the prompts:

Organisational markers	Frequency (Long essay topics out of 49)	Frequency (short out of 118)
Compare (and/ Contrast)	15 (31%)	2
Discuss	11 (22%)	37 (31%)
Yes-No ques word	6	15 (13%)
Wh-question word (what, why, how)	12 (24%)	49 (42%)
Give reasons/arguments	3	6
Comment	3	12
Write	2	4
Examine	1	1
Analyse		2
Evaluate	1	1
Elaborate		3
Consider		4
Describe		1
Answer	1	
Outline		1
Explain		1
Explicate		1
Summarise		1

Table 4.7: Organisational markers used in long & short literature essay questions

Examples of questions in both long and short literature questions using the above organisational markers are given below:

COMPARE-CONTRAST

Q. Compare and contrast Adrienne Rich and Ted Hughes' use of animal imagery in their poetry. (LQ)

Q. Compare the two characters, Oedipus and Teiresius, and discuss their roles in the play, *King Oedipus*. (SQ)

Q-Ex 6-7

DISCUSS

Q. Discuss the different ways Robert Herrick and Adrienne Rich look at women in their poems. (LQ)

Q. Discuss the role of Antonio in *The Merchant of Venice*. (SQ)

Q-Ex 8-9

YES-NO QUESTION WORD

Q. Do you think the depiction of evening in Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" and Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" is appropriate to their respective moods, settings and situations? Give reasons for your answer. (LQ)

Q. Is Shylock "more sinned against than sinning"? (SQ)

Q-Ex 10-11

WH-QUESTION WORD

Q. Show how money is a crucial element in both *The Financial Expert* and *Pride and Prejudice*. (LQ)

Q. What picture of Indian society do you get from a reading of *The Financial Expert*? (SQ)

Q-Ex 12-13

From a frequency count ‘Compare and/ Contrast’, ‘Discuss’ and ‘Wh-question word’ markers appeared mostly in long essay question data, whereas ‘Wh-question word’ and ‘Discuss’ markers occurred most frequently in short literature essay questions.

Compare (and/ Contrast) words appeared in many long questions because the purpose of the long questions was to compare different texts written by different authors belonging to different ages. In contrast to the long questions, only 2 questions from the short question group had ‘Compare’ verb. This is logical because the questions are typically based on a single text or on a single author and the comparisons are within very limited boundaries unlike the long questions. Even if there are comparisons and contrasts they are within the same text, as is evident in the above example. Despite this finding, there was more that I could see with regards to the ‘Compare’ verb and hence more discussion is dedicated to the next section, 4.2.2.2.2.

The frequent use of the marker, ‘Discuss’ is important to note in both long and short questions of the literature corpus, because the word literally means that the issue in question should be considered and offered an interpretation or evaluation and be looked into from several points of view (Preparing for Essay Tests <http://www.english-zone.com/study/essays.html> retrieved on 1/11/2007). More discussion on ‘Discuss’ is presented in the next section.

‘Wh-question’ word is also frequently used, not only in the short questions but also in the long ones. However, most of the ‘Wh-question’ words used in long questions are followed by a follow-on question or ensuing instruction as in the following question:

Q. What qualities do Aunt Jennifer's tigers share with Ted Hughes's jaguar? How do they defy their confinements of body and spirit?

Q-Ex 14

This indicates that a simple description is not enough. Many of the short questions, on the other hand, used only 'what', 'why' and 'Yes-No' (see Q-Ex 11 and 13) response questions without further ensuing instructions which may apparently mean that students are not required to do analysis for the essay, but that was not the case in practice.

From the above discussion it is clear that there was something else that was needed in addition to looking at the organisational markers to fully understand which rhetorical function was desired in the question. This is when I began to study the illocutionary force and implicit indication of desired Perlocutionary effect in the instructions of the questions.

4.2.2.2.2 Analysing rhetorical purpose from the perspective of illocutionary force and implicit indication of desired perlocutionary effect

The above analysis revealed that the language of the prompts was not always enough to interpret the desired expectations of the teaching community. Therefore, I undertook further investigation of the questions. It was seen that question setters used other instructional words in lieu of the more obvious one. For example, in the following question 'Discuss' acts as a replacement verb to 'Compare and/contrast'.

Q. Discuss the different ways Robert Herrick and Adrienne Rich look at women in their poems.

Q-Ex 8 (revisited)

We understand that it is a comparative question because of the two very significant words that follow, 'different ways' and the two fields, 'Robert Herrick and Adrienne Rich'. 'Discuss different ways' also indicate that students should present information and opinions about more than one side of the issue of the portrayal of women in this question. Since 'discuss' also means 'evaluate', this question can also be seen as 'Evaluative'. All the long questions were Compare-contrast type questions whether the terms were present or not, because this was also an objective behind the setting of the literature question papers.

Even if the words did not appear physically in the question, it was implied that the question would be comparative in nature. This was in accordance with what Horowitz (1986a:117) meant by "interchangeability of instructional verbs". Citing the use of 'Describe' in different disciplines he showed that tutors sometimes expect very different answers by using the same marker, that organisational markers can mean different things in different settings. Hence, the "successful interpretation of any prompt requires an appreciation of the interplay between organisational markers and specific content" (Horowitz 1986a: 117-118).

Although it was good to identify which organisational markers were frequently used, I realised that questions could not be separated neatly into prescribed categories only on the basis of which marker appeared how many times (as revealed from analyses in

4.2.2.2.1 and 4.2.2.2.2). Hence, I attempted to study the questions by looking beyond the physical meaning of the question instructions and applied my sense of discourse community expectations and came up with a number of dominant rhetorical functions to which the questions could tentatively belong to, because one question seemed to possess a number of rhetorical functions. This approach to analysis was also triangulated by another colleague of mine (as mentioned earlier in section 4.2.1.2 for language essay prompts). Again slight differences in our categorisation were found. My colleague came up with only 2 description questions from the short question corpus ('Summarise E.M. Forster's main arguments as they are presented in *Aspects of the Novel*.', and 'What are Aristotle's views on Mimesis?') which I had identified as Evaluative. I however, agreed that the former question was 'Descriptive' but retained the latter as 'Evaluative'. I realised that for the literature questions it was difficult to categorise them as purely 'Descriptive' even if the organisational markers clearly said 'Describe' or 'What is...?' No matter what the denotative meaning of the organisational markers were students were intended to handle the questions more analytically when answering for literature.

Consequently, the 49 long and 118 short literature topics were found to be asking for the following three dominant rhetorical shapes: 1) 'Compare and contrast', 2) 'Position-reason' and, 3) 'Evaluate'. Another minor, 'Describe', rhetorical function was also identified. This last one was expected to be found embedded in the essays with other major rhetorical function. This was certainly an issue to examine closely while working with the essays themselves. Examples of questions the above categories using different instructional verbs are given below, followed by a description of the categories.

Questions (Q-Ex 15-16) designed to elicit a ‘Compare-Contrast’ answer expect students to compare and contrast a relation between/among concepts ideas, texts, characters, writers and theme. And it is mainly found as long essay topics. Short essay questions can also have this type of question but it is a comparison usually between two scenes or characters within a single text or one theme/issue running across texts of the same author. As for example:

Q. Discuss the different ways Robert Herrick and Adrienne Rich look at women in their poems. (LQ)

Q. Who is the more pitiable character, Oedipus or Jocasta? (SQ)

Q-Ex 15-16

‘Position-Reason’ desired rhetorical questions (Q-Ex 17-18) ask the students to take a position or a point of view while discussing a topic. It is about the student’s perceptions about the topic whether he/she thinks the topic in discussion is acceptable or not. As shown in the Appendix 7 and the following examples, often these questions have yes/no question words.

Q. Humour is an important ingredient in *The Financial Expert* as well as *Pride and Prejudice*. Do you agree? Give arguments in favour of your opinion. (LQ)

Q. Is Shylock “more sinned against than sinning”? (SQ)

Q-Ex 17-18

‘Evaluate’ desired rhetorical question (Q-Ex 19-20) is about making a critical inquiry and judgement. It could either be by taking a position or done by taking an objective position. For example:

Q. Compare and contrast "Shooting an elephant" and "My Oedipus Complex" as first person narratives. (LQ)

Q. Discuss the dramatic qualities in Donne's "The Sun Rising". (SQ)

Q-Ex 19-20

'Describe' desired rhetorical question (Q-Ex 21) is less analytical in the sense that it requires the student to give a relatively straight forward description of the topic without a very critical stance or writer's perspective.

Q. Summarise E.M. Forster's main arguments as they are presented in *Aspects of the Novel*. (SQ)

Q-Ex 21

4.2.2.3 Analysing information source and object of enquiry of literature topics

Community experience suggests (Chapter 8, 8.2.2.1.ii) that the information source required by literature questions for the completion the task were both primary and secondary sources, which are analyses of the core texts and criticism written on them. The literature topics certainly draw students to tasks that involve analytical orientation and belong to metaphenomenal category because these topics depend a lot on background information (about the writer, age, literary criticism) for their successful completion, something that is essential in university academia.

4.3 Discussion

4.3.1 Differences between long and short English literature essay topics

The 49 long essay topics revealed that the most typical characteristic was that they were comparative studies requiring the writer to compare and contrast relation between/among concepts, ideas, texts, characters, writers and themes etc. covering a large scope. Even if the instructional verb, compare (and/ contrast) is not used the questions are evidently comparative in nature, whereas, the short essay topics are set based on a single text/theme/character/writer. In few a occasions, comparisons are found in short essays too but they are always between concepts, themes or characters within a single text or a couple of texts by the same writer, for example, two characters in the same text or a confrontation between two characters in the same scene. This obviously affects the length of the essays.

A second significant difference is that there is a predominant use of wh-question words/markers ('what commentaries...?'/ 'In what sense...?'/ 'Show how...?' etc.) in the short essay topics which explicitly expects the writers to give a focused description/ exposition/ explanation of a theme/ character/ scene/ text along with an implicit or implied demand to deal the topic analytically and critically. The 'wh-question' word occur 49 times out of 118, followed by 'discuss', 37 out of 118. Literally, 'wh-question' words are used in questions which seeks for information that is not known. However, as opined by Brookes and Grundy (1990), in contexts where the reader is a

teacher and is well informed, the purpose of ‘what’, ‘where’, ‘who’, ‘how’ and so on for students is to demonstrate that he/she has read widely and knows the topic. With ‘discuss’ it is not simply informing the reader but also presenting information and opinions on the topic in detail from different perspectives. Question setters also often use Yes-No question words which require ‘yes/no’ answers, but these questions are most of the time followed by secondary instructions (usually like, ‘elaborate your answer’/ ‘give reasons’ etc).

The field and subfield of the long question because of their comparative nature are restricted to fewer themes. They are more of overview like questions dealing with broad areas like ‘Theme of Nature in Wordsworth and Coleridge’, where the students are expected to find similarities and dissimilarities between separate texts or elements between texts/ characters/ themes and pull together the ideas and discuss them from a more wider angle. In contrast, with the short questions teachers set questions concentrating on small details from the text to test whether students have read the core text thoroughly or not. Hence, the essays are required to be more focused dealing with specific information. The risk with these questions is that if students read the text on a superficial level they would simply read a paraphrase of the text. They would leave out the minute details thinking of them as unnecessary information and present a weak case in the essay.

So in terms of complexity, the short essay topics might apparently seem less complex than the long essay topics because they deal more frequently with ‘wh-questions’ and

are concerned in most cases with single texts. However, that is not the case in reality. No matter how simple they seem compared to the long essay questions, even in a descriptive ‘wh-question’ word literature essay topic the student is expected to inform and analyse and not simply narrate and summarise, as asserted by Ahmed (1987). The same idea is echoed by Lillis (1999: 140), “even when the wording in an essay question at HE level directs student writers to describe, the expectation is that s/he will engage in some type of analysis rather than just description.”

4.3.2 Differences between English language and literature essay topics

This chapter analysed the essay prompts used by students of the First year in the English Department to write essays for their English language class and mainstream English literature classes.

One major difference between the literature and language topics is that the former had questions whereas most of the latter were formulated in terms of titles only. Although the literature essay topics are in form of complete questions, there is not enough explicit instruction provided in the question from which students can easily tell which rhetorical function is required from them, nor do they have any consistent questioning pattern. Students are expected to understand the questions and use the correct rhetorical pattern/s as appropriate. That is the irony of the literature topics.

These findings agree with those of Leki (1995: 34) when she says that these topics are more about “judgement and detail” rather than simply “personal opinion”. Students are required not only to explain or describe concept/s in an extended form (especially the long ones), but are also required to state personal views and argue their statements/opinions with logic and reason by citing evidences from the texts. Writers must show a kind of involvement or engagement with their topics that come with taking a particular point of view. They are required to develop their point of view by explaining the facts and concepts that persuaded them to take that point of view. This reiterates the view of Miller (1983: 223) that literary study enriches individual sensibilities and especially personal interpretive and evaluative powers which is also echoed by the teachers in their interviews of what they as teachers/readers of literature essays expect to find in their student’s essays (Chapter 8, 8.2.2.1.ii and 8.2.2.5.v).

The language essay topics/titles, on the other hand, illustrate a very different picture. They are primarily in form of titles with no instructions. This is fine as long as the topics are very subjective and based on personal experience. However, when topics include issues that are debatable then problems arise for the student in deciding from which perspective they have to write (if the student is trying to write on his or her own and not regurgitating some potted notes). An important conclusion I would like to note is that, because students are not given detailed questions and instructions for the language essays, they do not even try understanding what the questions ask them to write.

From the study of the fields and subfields there are also noticeable differences between literature and language topics. For the language essay topics, the main fields identified were 'Place' and 'People' which are primarily issues related to Bangladesh, whereas for the literature essays they were 'Characterisation' and 'Themes' in relation to the literary texts being studied.

It is also revealed that the language essay fields are often predictable as they revolve around topics that are usually related to students' life experiences or current affairs. Students are able to write with certain amount of linguistic proficiency without having to worry about analysing the content matter. The topics require students to engage mainly in writer-based prose which in Flower's (1979: 35) view is a "reprocessing" of "an earlier thinking experience as a way to recover what one knows." Here, students are only required to demonstrate their linguistic abilities without much emphasis laid on the content matter, that is, not much is assumed. The study shows that the language topics belong to the categories of **Description, Recount, Explanation and Position-Reason**, with 'description' category occurring most frequently and then explanation. The cross curricular fields are predominantly 'Place' and 'People' which require 'prior knowledge'. They are all associated with real world events and, therefore, the object of enquiry is found to be 'phenomenal' in nature. Writing language essays is considered a spontaneous activity separate from reading where opinion giving or being judgemental is essential and anecdotes and experience are treated as evidence. As mentioned earlier, categorising the language topics was difficult because most of them lacked any kind of

instructions so it is usually left to the writer's discretion to which rhetorical function is going to be used.

On the other hand, from the analysis of the English literature essay topics, both long and short, we find that they are all analytical rather than practical because they require students' sensitive, individual, analytic and interpretive abilities to be demonstrated in relation to the understanding of the literary text--- how well they can interpret it and then synthesise the information to put forth their views and rationalise their claims or statements with textual exemplums. They are cognitively more demanding, and to put it in the words of Flower (1979: 19), student writers must not "simply express thought but transform it in certain complex but describable ways for the needs of a reader." The information sources required for literature topics are both primary and secondary, which contradicts Moore and Morton's findings (2005) where they identified university assignments use more secondary sources (4.1). In terms of the object of enquiry, they belong to the metaphenomenal category because they depend a lot on background knowledge of various abstract ideas, concepts and theories related to the literary text for the successful completion of the essay, which is essential in university academia. Finally, in terms of the rhetorical purpose the literature topics were found to belong to the categories of **Compare-Contrast**, **Evaluate** and **Position-Reason**. Although **Describe** category was not seen to be in common occurrence throughout the corpus, it must be acknowledged that most of the essays required the students to combine and use different rhetorical functions. A lot of descriptions and summarising were also necessary to successfully compose the essay (as will be seen in Chapter 6). This is true not only for the literature topics but also for the language topics which confirms Horowitz's findings

(1986a: 109) that “categories do not have hard and fast boundaries; rather, they blend into one another at the edges”. It was very difficult to classify the themes into social human and internal human as they at times seemed to overlap. So categorising and subcategorising the topics into separate compartments can sometimes cause problems if one is not flexible in making shifts in the categories according to the demand of the section of the essay being written.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to answer Research Q 1. It is observed that students’ writing can improve if they become aware of the conventions needed for the particular genre they are required to produce. One of the ways by which students can become better writers academically is when they understand the nature of the questions or tasks that are set for them. This chapter has tried to identify the major recognisable patterns in questions within our specific discipline by classifying them into predominant categories. What emerges from the analysis is that there is a fairly consistent pattern of questions in some cases and problematic ones in some other.

In real life spoken language situations illocutionary and perlocutionary effects can be realised in many different ways which belong to the boundaries of Speech Act Theory, but with regards to essay questions and actual production of essays if there is no correspondence between the intention and achievement then there will be a problem. In order to understand how else students might come to understand what is expected of

them investigation of the real essays and interviewing people concerned became essential, thence the next chapters.

CHAPTER 5: ANALYTICAL APPROACH AND MODEL DEVELOPMENT FOR ANALYSING STUDENTS' ESSAYS

5.0 Introduction

The study aims to investigate First Year students' English Language and Literature essays to get a richer understanding of what they write and how they structure their essays when they are writing under timed conditions. In order to describe what they write, I set out to do text analysis and attempted at 1) developing models with the pattern of moves to suit my students' essays and, 2) showing how the moves are realised (Chapter 6).

In this chapter, I first describe my data set from the two contexts and then give the reasons for classifying them. My decision for choosing the analytical approach is provided. Terms associated with the approach are defined. Discussion of the various analytical frameworks that influenced me in developing my models, in addition to detailed descriptions of the models from the perspective of Introduction-Body-Conclusion, are clarified at the end of the chapter. As a sequel to this Chapter, detailed analyses of the literature and language essays with their move patterns and move realisations using the models are discussed in Chapter 6.

5.1 Data description

I randomly collected around 300 holistically marked First year English literature and language essays marked by different tutors from both the contexts and decided to consider each set as a genre and identify their genre structure.

5.2 Data classification

Among the 300 essays, a set of 100 essays were finally selected on the basis of only the top and bottom grades¹⁵. 60 English language and 40 English literature essays were selected for analysis. I selected the 30 top grade and the 30 low grade English language scripts and 20 high (HGE) and 20 low (LGE) grade English literature scripts and classified them into two distinct groups to get a clear picture of the contrasting features present in the two sets (more on data classification in chapter 6). The segregation of the essays into high and low has nothing to do with why the essays were given that grade but just a decision about which bits of data to analyse. The marks as given by teachers, therefore, acted as a benchmark criterion for dividing the data into different groups assuming that the essays selected from the two extremes would exemplify what is valued in the genre. The middle order ones were, therefore, not analysed with the presumption that they would have features of both good and poor essays.

¹⁵ High grade essays (HGE) is equivalent to A- and above (58% and above) and low grade essays (LGE) is equivalent to C++ and below (45% and below)

5.3 Approach to data analysis

After segregating the two groups analysis was done on the basis of move analysis. As mentioned earlier (2.4) because my purpose was to look into the structure of essays I found Move analysis most suitable. It should be noted that although much research is being carried out on analysing different genres, students' essays have not been extensively researched by genre analysts as they are seen to be "protean forms whose structure is hard to pin down" (Weber 2001: 20). I did not have any model which I could use without modifications to analyse my essays. All the analytical frameworks that I consulted did not fit neatly into the data set since my context was very different from all the other research contexts. So, models were developed to perform the move analysis that fitted the essays by modifying previous models.

In order to accomplish the first aim (section 5.0), a Swalesian framework of genre analysis popular in ESP academic and professional settings was used because of my interest in looking at students' English essay writing as "communicative events" situated within a "discourse community" characterised by their "communicative purposes" or goals exhibiting certain "patterns" in terms of "structure, style, content and intended audience" (Swales 1990: 58). Swales' CARS model was looked at but it was not suitable as my data did not match the advanced level communicative purposes nor fit neatly into the patterns suggested by the RA genre model. Moreover, I intended to study essays in their entirety instead of just one section of the essays written by First year university students. There have been some studies on students' complete essays done from various perspectives like the ones by Horowitz (1989) on the process of doing

research and writing undergraduate research paper, Hyland (1990) on argumentative essays, Paltridge (2001, 1995) on students' problem-solution pattern essay, and Matsuzono (2004) on TWE sample and students' essays mainly based on Henry and Roseberry's (1997) study of essay Introductions and Conclusions.

I was interested in looking at all the moves in the complete essays, identifying the functional labels of each move and how they were realised. As a result, I consulted the following studies which I found useful: Hyland (1990), Henry and Roseberry (1997), Derewianka (1990, 2003), Labov (1972), Hoey (1983) and Matsuzono (2004).

From an examination of topics in Chapter 4, it was revealed that the language topics mainly belonged to the categories of Description, Recount, Explanation and Position-Reason and literature topics belonged to the categories of Compare-Contrast, Evaluate and Position-Reason, which according to Paltridge (1996) are examples of text-type (2.4.1) and according to Bruce (2008) are examples of cognitive genres (2.4.1). Although I tried using a single model that could work across the two sets of data, I was unable to do so. Most of the language essays were found to be very reflective/ personalised and possessed a rather casual style that required fewer technical moves in terms of structure than the essays with more academically demanding rhetorical functions. The nature of the essays belonging to Explanation, Position-Reason, Compare-Contrast and Evaluate categories were primarily analytical and discussion oriented. The distinguishing features of these essays were that they required the writer to do either 1) explain and inform the reader with a certain degree of critical thinking and

not necessarily take a stance and have a detached position as has been cited by Andrews (1989) , or 2) inform readers, analyse opinions from different perspectives and then take a position. Consequently, I labelled these essays broadly as ‘Exposition-Discussion’. The Description and Recount essays, on the other hand, were found to be narrative and descriptive. Primarily all the literature essay topics, with a few language ones, belonged to the former group, whereas most of the language essays topics belonged to the ‘Description-Recount’ group. This supports my developing notion that language and literature essays are two different genres.

As a result, I developed two models that could broadly fit into the essays that belonged to the two major types. For the sake of simplifying terminologies I will be referring to the two models as ‘Exposition-Discussion’ model and ‘Description-Recount’ model from now on. The former fitted the literature essays and some explanatory and argumentative type language essays but the ‘Description-Recount based’ model fitted most of the descriptive, personalised and experiential language essays.

5.3.1 Move analysis

Genre analysis allows the analyst to identify the characteristic features of style, organisation, rhetoric and grammar. An important aspect in genre analysis is to identify genre as possessing a set of planned moves (Swales 1981, 1990, 2004; Hopkins and Dudley-Evans 1988; Hyland 1990; Bhatia 1993; Henry and Roseberry 1997, 2001, Huttner 2005). Mirador (2000) provides an elaborate description of ‘move’ in her study of the move analysis of tutor feedback to part-time postgraduate students. She cites that

it was first coined by Bellack in 1964 to refer to the “manoeuvres” (Mirador 2000: 46) students and teachers undertake in classroom discourse which was echoed by others like Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) and Nunan (1993) and was taken up later by genre analysts. Mirador (2000: 47) defines ‘move’ as “the logical manoeuvre adopted by the communicator/s in written or spoken discourse”. Similarly, Henry and Roseberry (2001: 154) define ‘move’ “as a part of text, written or spoken, which achieves a particular purpose within a text...in some way to fulfilling the overall purpose of the genre.” Although Swales used moves explicitly for his 1981 analysis of RA, he did not define them very clearly (Mirador 2000). Hopkins and Dudley-Evans (1988: 115) in their paper on analysing MSc dissertations and articles, acknowledged that Swales’ ‘moves’ were more “accurate” and “rigorous” in reflecting the writer’s purpose than what was achieved through the generalised categorisation of texts types (classification or description). Labov (1972) when discussing the structure of narratives of personal experience in *Language in the Inner City: Studies in the Black English Vernacular* referred to these ‘moves’ as ‘elements’. Likewise, Hasan (1989) also used the notion of the ‘elements’ which she identified as optional and obligatory. This was in turn taken up almost by all analysts because all moves do not and need not occur at all times. In addition to moves, Swales (1990) also has ‘steps’ or ‘options’ to express each ‘move’. Bhatia (1993: 31-32) and Henry and Roseberry (1997) have termed them as “strategies”, the means or “tactical choices” (Henry and Roseberry 1997: 481) a writer employs to fulfil the writing requirements.

I will use the Move-Strategy method to analyse my students' essays. The explanation for this is quite clearly given by Henry and Roseberry's (1999) study on the generic structure and linguistic features of essay introductions, that 'steps' is an appropriate term in cases when there is a fixed order of 'tactical choices' being made which is not the case with their randomly chosen expository text-types. I find this a valid explanation because my students also come up with a wide choice of strategies to express or do their moves. In this respect, my model is more like the Henry and Roseberry's (1997) model than Hyland's.

It should be noted that for my essay analyses I will be using acronyms for both Move and Strategies, instead of just the Moves to be able to see things more clearly as to what different choices the students are taking within the moves. The excerpts used to illustrate the discussion will appear with my analysis in its original form.

5.4 Previous research relevant to the analytical models of the present study

For this study, different studies on move structure in essays were consulted which are outlined below. I have used different elements from a number of studies conducted on pattern of moves in essays that are outlined here. The studies provided useful guidelines for the development of my models. However, modifications to the previous studies had to be made. Firstly, because all the existing move labels did not fully capture the essence of the moves of my essays (as in Henry and Roseberry and Matsuzono's models). Secondly, there were several unnecessary overlappings of the moves (as in Henry and

Roseberry). Thirdly, some of models did not clearly distinguish the Move-Strategies (as in Hyland). And finally, applying any model not designed to fulfil the functions of my corpus seemed inappropriate.

5.4.1 Hyland's (1990) structure of argumentative essays

One of the studies was Hyland's (1990) analytical framework, based on the Swalesian model, where he described the move and rhetorical structures of 65 argumentative essays submitted for Papua New Guinea High school matriculation in English.

Hyland's (1990) analytical framework was useful for my analysis for a number of reasons. Firstly, he looked at entire academic essays from the perspective of moves and rhetorical structuring, secondly, they were also data written under timed conditions and belonged to almost the same level. Thirdly, although his investigation of argumentative essays may not match all the essays in my corpus, they are suitable for most of them, especially the ones belonging to Exposition-Discussion type. We know that the purpose of argumentation is to offer a set of reasons or evidence to support certain claim, thesis or view being made with appropriate analysis and exposition, a means of inquiry done logically throughout the body (Andrews 1989, Weston 2000), and this is predominantly a major focus of any academic writing, and henceforth, for my students too. My students might not always have to take a side to make a claim or persuade the reader but they certainly need to cite reasons and justify the statements/claims made and discuss that and present a detached discussion. This coincides with Henry and Roseberry's (1997, 1999) arguments for terming their set of essays for genre analysis as 'expository' text

types. The ‘Position-Reason’, ‘Evaluate’ and ‘Explanation’ essays from the literature and some language essay corpus could be analysed using Hyland’s model with some modifications as all these types are expository in nature. Finally, the labelling of the moves in Hyland’s framework corresponded more appropriately with my students’ essays, and were more descriptive and explanatory than the other two studies which had more generalised labels.

Stage	Move
1. Thesis	(Gambit) Attention Grabber- controversial statement or dramatic illustration (Information) Presents background material for topic contextualization Proposition Furnishes a specific statement of position (Evaluation) Brief support of proposition (Marker) Introduces and/or identifies a list
2. Argument (4-move argument sequence can be repeated indefinitely)	Marker Signals the introduction of a claim and relates it to the text (Restatement) Rephrasing or repetition of Proposition Claim of the Argument States reason for acceptance of the proposition. Typically based on: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Strength of perceived shared assumptions. A generalisation based on data/evidence Force of conviction Support for the Claim States the grounds which underpin the claim. Typically: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Explicating assumptions used to make claim Providing data or citing references.
3. Conclusion	(Marker) Signals conclusion boundary Consolidation Presents the significance of Argument stage to the Proposition (Affirmation) Restates Proposition (Close) Widens context or perspective of proposition

Table 5.1: Hyland’s (1990: 69) elements of structure of the Argumentative essay; bolded ones are the obligatory moves and optional moves are bracketed

However, Hyland's model did not have the Move-step or Move-strategy approach, hence I looked at other studies.

5.4.2 Henry and Roseberry's (1997) structure of expository texts

Henry and Roseberry's (1997) study was based on analysis of 'expository' text types. The data belonged to a wide range of genres, newspaper and magazine articles, encyclopaedia entries, short essays from travel books and atlases, illustrative case studies from management textbooks, NS academic essays so and so on. However, the investigation was meant for students to be able to write better introductions and conclusions to expository essays. In addition to that, they claim that the essays are expository and encompass a wide range of topics and styles. Further research is required to limit the individual genres in their data so that a more restricted range of linguistic items is applied to them. I had a similar problem with my data of students' essays because the literature questions in terms of topics varied hugely from one another and did not fit into any single type. As a result, I had to combine and permute different models to develop my framework that could signal the possible moves found in my students' writing of the literature and language essays. Not only that, I also had to include the language topics to fit into my analytical framework. Therefore, in this respect I found that I could use a lot of ideas for my framework from this study. There were several moves and strategies¹⁶ in Henry and Roseberry's (1997) framework. Only some of them are shown in the Tables (5.2 and 5.3) below for reasons of space:

¹⁶ See Appendix 8 for complete moves and strategies

Move	Strategies (few examples only)
Introduction to the Topic (IT)	Make a general statement Give a general historical perspective Give a general definition
Narrowing the Focus (NF)	Give specific facts, statistics, e.g., historical background, justification, classification, the next item in a set, or specific background information Explain /give reasons for the IT move Introduce a problem
Stating the Central Idea (CI)	State a fact (including general and specific statements) State a problem Provide a Preview of the essay structure

Table 5.2: Henry and Roseberry's (1997: 485) moves and examples of a few strategies in Introduction; bolded move is obligatory

Move	Strategies (few examples only)
Commitment to Central Idea (CC)	Show a degree of Commitment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate • State /reaffirm the Central Idea Other strategies are used less frequently <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State personal opinion /reaction to the Central Idea • Make a prediction • Sum up and evaluate • Update the Central Idea
Expansion (EX)	Evaluation Occurring only once or twice in the corpus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a subjective evaluation plus reasons/ explanation • Identify greater problems • Give consequences of the problem • Show future directions

Table 5.3: Henry and Roseberry's (1997: 492) moves and examples of a few strategies in Conclusion

5.4.3 Matsuzono's (2004) structure of TWE essays

The third study I looked at was by Matsuzono (2004) which mainly followed Henry and Roseberry's (1997) analysis to investigate TWE sample and students' essays, but included the Body section of the essays as the study was conducted on complete essays.

The following table illustrates the different moves and few examples of the strategies identified :

	Move	Strategies (examples)
Introduction	Introducing the Topic (IT)	Asking a question related to the proposition
	Narrowing the focus (NF)	Stating two answers to the question
	Stating the Central Idea (CI)	Stating an opinion, position or preference
Body	Stating the Central Supporting Idea (CSI)	Stating a general phenomenon and, fact and reason
	Elaborating on the Central Supporting Idea (ECS)	Giving some examples
	Commitment to the Central Supporting Idea (CCS)	Evaluating the ECS move
	Stating the counter argument (SCA)	Stating some difficulty related to Proposition
	Recount (R)	Stating factual recount
Conclusion	Commitment to Central Idea	Repeating Proposition
	Expansion	Making a personal veiwpoint
	Reference to Discussion (RD)	Stating a general veiwpoint

Table: 5.4 Matsuzono’s (2004) moves in TWE students’ essays; bolded moves are obligatory

5.4.4 Derewianka's (1990) and Labov’s (1972) structure of recount essays/narratives

It was necessary for me to look at narrative models because of the frequent number of topics in the English language topic corpus that belonged to this rhetorical genre. And for this reason I studied Derewianka and Labov’s models. Since Derewianka’s (1990) Recount genre model did not have anything for Conclusions, I decided to look into Labov’s (1972) Narrative model.

Labov's Narrative model includes stages of Abstract, Orientation, Complicating Event, Evaluation, Result/ Resolution and Coda, whereas, Derewianka's Recount pattern possesses Orientation, Series of Events and Personal Comment. Labov's initiating point of Abstract is absent in Derewianka and I feel that both 'Abstract' and 'Orientation' are Introductory stages of setting the scene and eventually focus on the central event. 'Orientation' is present in both models and this according to me presents the Introduction of the essay. Labov's 'Complicating Events' and 'Evaluation' correspond with Derewianka's 'Series of Events' and 'Personal Comment'. The latter step, Labov's 'Evaluation' and Derewianka's 'Personal comment', is like a commentary (either positive or negative) on the events described and is optional and can appear at various points during the descriptions of events. The Result and Coda of Labov are Concluding stages that have not been indicated in Derewianka's model but are integral stages in Labov's model to mark the ending of narratives. This is an obligatory stage in my students' essays and is needed to successfully round off the essay.

Although Derewianka's model of the Recount genre of telling what happened over time did not provide me with all the stages for developing my model, it was significant as Derewianka (2003, 1990) identified the genre as possessing a number of sub-genres which were very similar to the topics that my students were asked to write on, as the following: Personal Recount ('Visit to a famous place'), Factual Recount ('President Bill Clinton's Visit to Bangladesh'), Biographical Recount ('Life of a Rickshapuller'), Autobiographical Recount ('Your Autobiography'), Historical Recount ('21st February') and Imaginative Recount ('If I were a Millionaire'). The examples in the

parenthesis of essay titles are from my list of students' language essay topics and they show how frequently this type was used as a writing task in the language course. In addition to that, I found that experiential essays like 'My favourite Teacher' or 'My favourite Sport' also tended to use a similar pattern of possessing a series of descriptions without the time sequence. So, essays that possessed the rhetorical functions of 'Description' and 'Recount' could be analysed using the Derewianka (1990)- Labov (1972) model with a few modifications and have been categorised as Description-Recount essays.

5.4.5 Hoey's (1983) Matching and General-Particular patterns

Hoey's (1983) concepts of Matching and General-Particular patterns are not move models but I have used them in my discussion as they illustrate some interesting points about my text. In Hoey's study of analysing patterns of discourse, he identified how Matching happens when two parts of a discourse are compared in respect of their details. When this matching happens for similarity it is called Matching Compatibility and when it happens for differences it is called Matching Contrast. This is one type of systematic repetition that signals a relation between ideas held together in the organisation of longer paragraphs. This pattern is commonly seen in the Compare-Contrast essays that students write for both language and literature. It is a frequently occurring pattern that is embedded within a wide range of written and spoken genres (such as newspaper/television reports, political talks etc.).

Matching relations can take the form of General-Particular or Generalisation-Example or Preview-Detail relations to organise long passages. The idea behind this pattern is that the discourse would typically begin with a broad general idea subsequently followed by examples dealt in detail. This pattern can either take the form of Matching Compatibility or Contrast. This pattern appeared in a lot of my students' texts when they were constructing both the Introduction and Body of their essays.

All the above studies were productive for me because many moves were functioning in a somewhat similar fashion although they had different labellings. This is only natural since the communicative purposes are more or less similar, "to display knowledge presented to them by teachers or lecturers or acquired from prescribed texts" (Henry and Roseberry 1997: 479) and are aimed at almost the same level of students (High school /GCSE/ NNS students seeking graduate studies abroad) who are "burdened with the task of writing essays" (p.479).

5.5 Developing analytical models for the present study

My analytical models were developed by combining different perspectives: the knowledge gained from previous models with the patterns that I found after analysing my students' high grade literature and language essays and from the opinions gathered from discourse community members. However, low grade essays were also studied to detect what differences lay between the presence of the moves and the realisations of them. Moreover, it is the LGE writers who need the EAP input and assistance for improving their writing performance as has been reported by Krishnamurthy and Kosem

(2007). Despite the fact that text analysis and model development went hand in hand I am presenting the development of the models before presenting my text analysis because I feel it will be easier for readers to delve into the texts with a model in hand to understand what my students are doing when I discuss the moves.

From the study of my students' texts and the previous studies it was evident that all essays possess the three part generic structure: Introduction, Body and Conclusion. Only Henry and Roseberry's (1997) study stated that Conclusions were not very essential. I found, like the other three studies, that almost all my essays (literature and language) possess the three part generic structure. Students are aware of the apparent three part structure but what lies within these three sections is intriguing for most students. After presenting the model, I will discuss in detail what I found students doing with the moves within the three-part structure of the language and literature essays. The moves have not been numbered as they did not appear to come in a sequence all the time.

Thus, in Edge and Richard's (1998: 348) words which they used to define qualitative studies, my models are not "so very original and distinct from what has gone before, but the search for it" has made me understand better the issues involved with First year students' English literature and language essays in my Department—what is being done, what is lacking, how things can hopefully be improved. The first model (Table 5.5) seemed to work well with essays possessing rhetorical functions of Evaluation, Explanation, Position-Reason, Argumentation, Exposition as well as Compare-Contrast. However, it could not be used with essays possessing rhetorical functions of Description

and Recount. Hence, a second model (Table 5.6) was developed for essays with topics that required students to simply give a description of experiences or recount of events. Developing this model became necessary because of the high frequency of English language topics belonging to this rhetorical genre. These essays are very personal, anecdotal and reflective and are mainly set for general English language writing tasks as was evident from topic analysis (Chapter 4). Jaworski and Coupland (2006) define narratives as discursive accounts of factual or fictitious events that take or will take place at a particular time with a beginning, middle and end. My students are not required to write stories but most of the language essays require them to retell series of factual or fictitious events along with descriptions which may or may not follow chronological order.

The first model is developed primarily from the study of the literature essays and some argumentative/position-reason/evaluation type language essays and I will term this as the 'Exposition-Discussion' based model. The second model developed mainly from the study of language essays will be termed as the 'Description-Recount' based model.

‘Exposition-Discussion’ model

Stage	M	Move	Strategy	S	Flexibility
Introduction	O	Opener	Gambit and/or Background Information and/or Definition and/or General Statement	G BI D GS	Optional
	NTP	Narrowing towards Proposition			Optional
	P	Proposition	Stating Thesis or Stating Claim	ST SC	Obligatory
	EP	Elaborating Proposition			Optional
	PD	Plan of Development			Optional
Body	SP	Supporting Proposition			Obligatory
Move pair SP^ESP is recursive The strategies can take any order	ESP	Elaborating Supporting Proposition	Giving Evidence and Explaining Evidence and/or Giving Evidence & Explaining at the same time	Ev Ex EvEx	Obligatory
Conclusion	RP	Restating Proposition	Consolidation of Ideas and/or Confirming Proposition and/or Elaborating Confirmed Proposition	CI CP ECP	Obligatory
	BP	Beyond Proposition	Personal Response and/or Making Suggestions and/or Making Predictions and/or Widening Proposition	PR MS MP WP	Optional

Table 5.5: Elements of structure in the ‘Exposition-Discussion’ based model. *The bolded ones are obligatory*

‘Description-Recount’ model

Stage	M	Move	Strategy	S	Flexibility
Introduction	O	Opener	Giving Background Information and/or Making General Statement	BI GS	Optional
	P	Proposition	Giving Personal Response/comment and/or Defining and/or Narrating Main Event/describing Main Issue	PR D ME/MI	Obligatory
	EP	Elaborating Proposition			Optional
	PD	Plan of Development			Optional
Body	E/and D	Series of Events/and Descriptions			Obligatory
	PR	Personal Response			Optional
Conclusion	RP	Restating Proposition	Confirming Proposition and/or Personal Response/ Comment and/or Making Suggestions	CP PR MS	Obligatory

Table 5.6: Elements of structure in the ‘Description-Recount’ based model

5.5.1 Modelling the ‘Introduction’

5.5.1.1 ‘Exposition-Discussion’ model

In all the studies, the Introduction section was seen to possess a number of possible ways to open. But they all emphasised on the fact that the first moves were rather general than specific. This coincided with Hoey’s (1983) General-Particular pattern. Henry and Roseberry and Matsuzono’s study had three similar moves with one

obligatory move, 'Stating the Central Idea' (CI). Henry and Roseberry's 'Introduction to Topic' (IT) had a number of strategies which I adapted with different labellings as I found them to be appropriate. They also had 'Narrowing the Focus' (NF), which is also present in my model but it is absent in Hyland and I label it as 'Narrowing towards Proposition' (NTP). I also used Hyland's opening move labels to label the strategies of my 'Opener' move. His optional openers, 'Gambit' or 'Attention Grabber' and 'Information' were both present in mine. In fact, my students used more options, because they were opening their essays using almost all the possible strategies, like giving a catchy quotation in form of a 'gambit', or an interesting anecdote or giving a bit of background details of the text or starting with a definition or making some general statements. Instead of calling these, Moves, as Hyland did, I identified them as 'Strategies'- Gambit/Background Information/Definition/General Statement (G/BI/D/GS) of the 'Opener' (O) move, which students chose to take according to their needs.

Since the main purpose of the Introduction section is to state the central claim or proposition or idea I found that almost all the HGE possessed one obligatory move which I termed 'Proposition' (P), following Hyland. The two main ways of realising this move, I felt, were by Stating the Thesis/Claim (ST/SC). The literature questions are mainly on themes or issues whereas many of the language essays are on problem issues and arguments so labelling the strategies with ST/SC seemed appropriate. This is an obligatory move in Henry and Roseberry (1997) and Matsuzono (2004) also. Apart from the similarities among the models, there are differences as well. One of Hyland's last

two optional 'Thesis' moves, the 'Marker', is one of Henry and Roseberry's strategies (Provide a preview of the essay structure) to realise the obligatory 'Stating the Central Idea' (CI) move. This is where my moves correspond with Hyland's as I too have two optional moves, 'Elaborating Proposition' (EP) and 'Plan of Development' (PD) which are same as 'Evaluation' and 'Marker' moves of Hyland.

5.5.1.2 'Description-Recount' model

The Introduction stage combined Labov's initiating point of 'Abstract' and 'Orientation' stages (which was only Orientation in Derewianka 1990), and were labelled as Opener (O), Proposition (P), Elaborating Proposition (EP) and Plan of Development (PD) moves, all very similar to the Discussion model. The difference was in the fashion these moves were realised. O, an optional move, sets the scene using strategies, giving Background Information or General Statement (BI/GS) about the topic like telling a story or diary entry, giving background information, introducing the person. This is followed by P (Proposition), an obligatory move, which provides the main idea or central event of the essay. However, there are no complex steps to realise it as the strategies to realise this move are primarily done by providing Personal Response (PR) and/or by Defining (D) and/or by narrating the Main Event (ME) or by describing the Main Issue (MI). This may be followed by two optional moves, Elaborating Proposition (EP) and Plan of Development (PD).

5.5.2 Modelling the 'Body'

5.5.2.1 'Exposition-Discussion' model

The Body section was modelled by adapting Hyland's and Matsuzono's framework with slight changes made to fit my data. Henry and Roseberry did not analyse the Body of the essays.

Firstly, some changes to the first two moves of Hyland's 'Body' were made. Hyland's 'Marker' and 'Restatement' were similar to what I call 'Supporting Proposition' (SP), akin to topic sentence that supports the Thesis statement in the Introduction. This SP is, however, reiterated throughout the essay which signals the reader/examiner what the topic focus is. It is also a good way of reminding the writer himself/herself not to digress. Although my labellings are different, my moves were closer to Matsuzono's 'Stating the Central Supporting Idea' (CSI), and 'Elaborating on the Central Supporting Idea' (ECS). However, his last two moves were not pertinent to my data set. Hyland's 'Claim-Support' pair corresponded with Matsuzono's CSI-ECS-CCS which I labelled as 'Supporting Proposition' (SP), and 'Elaborating Supporting Proposition' (ESP), where ESP is realised by Ev, Ex/ EvEx. Hyland's 'Claim' is equivalent to my SP. I labelled it SP because I feel my Proposition or Claim was already done in the Introduction. What students do in the Body is support the 'Proposition' or endorse the validity of the proposition with SP which is backed up by the "indispensable second part" (Hyland 1990: 73), the 'Elaborating Supporting Proposition' (ESP). In that case, SP is a sequel to P and is always paired up with ESP which are both obligatory like Hyland's 'Claim' and 'Support' moves.

I have a number of strategies for ESP, which are essential requirements to realise the ESP move. Simply giving evidences to elaborate supporting proposition will not suffice. The claims supported by Evidence (Ev) must be justified or explained further (Ex), which has been termed as “Warrants” or statements that “bridge between data and claim” by Toulmin in his 1958 model of informal logic that has been successful in teaching of argumentative/ persuasive writing (cited in Connor and Lauer, 1988). So the Ev and Ex is another pair that go together. The move pair SP-ESP is often realised by Hoey’s General-Particular Matching relation.

5.5.2.2 ‘Description-Recount’ model

It was mainly the Body of these essay types which distinguished it from the other model, Exposition-Discussion, because students did not have to go into any forms of complications or arguments or justifications to prove anything. The only required steps here are the Series of accounts of events (E) or first hand experience that may be chronological or non-chronological and/or series of descriptions (D) provided along with some personal responses or comments (PR) on the issues.

Instead of Labov’s ‘Complicating Events’ and ‘Evaluation’, Derewianka uses ‘Series of Events’ and ‘Personal Comment’ which are more pertinent to my data. The latter step (‘Evaluation’/ ‘Personal comment’) is like a commentary or response (either positive or negative) on the events described. It is optional and is embedded at various points as the events are being described.

5.5.3 Modelling the 'Conclusion'

5.5.3.1 'Exposition-Discussion' model

With the Conclusion stage I found Henry and Roseberry's framework more suitable as there were a number of possible strategies to a single move both in mine and theirs. They identified thirteen strategies to express their 'Commitment to Central idea' (CC) move, whereas I found three strategies to realise the obligatory 'Reconfirming Proposition' (RP) move and four strategies to realise the optional 'Beyond Proposition' (BP) move. The first three strategies, 'Consolidation of Ideas', 'Confirming Proposition', 'Elaborating Confirmed Proposition' appeared more in the literature essays and the latter four, 'Personal Response', 'Making Suggestions', 'Making Predictions', 'Widening Proposition' in the language essays. In Hyland's framework 'Consolidation' is an obligatory move, whereas, I found this present in the literature essays of more mature writers only. I observed 'Confirming Proposition' (CP) to be present in almost all essays even in the well written literature essays as a way of concluding, which was 'Affirmation' in Hyland and an optional move. Henry and Roseberry and Matsuzono had 'Commitment to Central Idea' which corresponded with my CP. Therefore, I decided to have a compulsory Conclusion move, Restating Proposition, RP, with a number of strategies to realise the move. In the language essays I did not find too many CI or CP. A few essays did have CP. What I mostly found corresponded with the strategies identified by Henry and Roseberry's in their conclusions. In the Henry and Roseberry Conclusion, I found that there were certain strategies that overlapped in both their CC and EX moves, (for example, 'State personal opinion/reaction to the central

Idea' and 'Identify a greater benefit' in CC were very close to 'Make a subjective evaluation plus reasons', 'Offer an alternative/make a suggestion', 'Make a prediction', 'Show future directions' in the EX). To me they seemed to be doing the same thing which was like going beyond the stated proposition so I labelled another move, an optional one, BP. As the main purpose of a conclusion is to condense the main claims made throughout the essay, I considered BP an optional move. Hyland's optional 'Close' move was realised by widening context or perspective of proposition which was identified by the 'Expansion' optional move by Henry and Roseberry and Matsuzono. I termed this as 'Widening Proposition', an occasional strategy of the BP move. The function of this move is to relate the main proposition to a wider context, to carry the main idea forward to wider and bigger unstated issues and make suggestions or predictions. Hyland sees this as providing a prospective focus in contrast to the retrospective function of his obligatory 'Consolidation' move and my RP-CI (Restating Proposition-Consolidation of ideas) move-strategy.

Although I found Henry and Roseberry's Conclusion findings very useful for my study, I disagree with their views on the non-essentiality of Conclusions because my data show that Conclusions are present in almost all the essays with rare exceptions and which was also reiterated by discourse community consensus. Hyland and Matsuzono also found conclusions in all their essays and observed them as obligatory. In my case, few literature essays did not have conclusions in separate paragraphs and was seen to occur at the end of the last Body paragraph. However, almost all language essays possessed Conclusions.

5.5.3.2 'Description-Recount' model

The Result and Coda of Labov's model (1972) are Concluding and integral stages to mark the ending of narratives that have not been indicated in Derewianka's model. This is an obligatory stage in my students' essays and is needed to successfully round off the essay. All essays had conclusions that ended with Restating Proposition (RP), realised mainly with a final personal note or response made on the main event/description/ issue being narrated or described along with making suggestions (PR and /or MS). One essay in the LGE Conclusion is seen to have Confirming Proposition (CP) as a strategy. Hence, I kept that as a strategy too in my model.

5.6 Discussion

This section will discuss the relationship between the 'Description-Recount' and 'Exposition-Discussion' models developed for the text analysis part of the study.

5.6.1 Similarities

Essays belonging to both models follow the organisational principle of the three-part text structure: Introduction, Body and Conclusion. The structure of Introduction was more or less similar in both the models, with Proposition, P, as the only obligatory move. However, it was also found that the 'Description-Recount' was simpler and had fewer strategies to realise the Introduction moves, which is more of a dissimilarity.

5.6.2 Dissimilarities

The ‘Description-Recount’ model followed a simpler pattern of text organisation and this is why the Introduction moves are not complex as mentioned in the above section. The writers using ‘Description-Recount’ based essays are required to only use the method of “recapitulating past experience by matching a verbal sequence of clauses to the sequence of events which (it is inferred) actually occurred” (Labov 1972: 359-360), which is certainly a less complex pattern. The ‘Exposition-Discussion’ model, on the other hand, has a more complex text structure as the communicative purpose of the texts are cognitively more demanding.

The ‘Body’ is where the two models mostly differ. The realisation of the SP-ESP move pair in ‘Exposition-Discussion’ model is complex and very crucial to the writing of successful analytical essays. In ‘Description-Recount’ based essays it is merely done by recounting or describing. In the same way, the Conclusions are also simpler in the latter model as it is done by a personal comment. The presence and absence of this PR or personal response factor is another major point of difference between the two models.

5.7 Conclusion

From the above discussion, it is understood that I developed my models on the basis of other previous work done on essays in addition to analysing my own data (textual and contextual data) carefully. A full account of essays analysed according to the models developed is discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 6: ANALYSING STUDENTS' ESSAYS

6.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses in detail the move structure of the essays and how the moves are realised for the high grade essays (HGE) and low grade essays (LGE). A total of 100 essays were analysed¹⁷. The detailed distribution of the essay data is presented in Figure 6.1. The chapter discusses the English language essays (30+30) using first the 'Description-Recount' and then 'Exposition-Discussion' models separately, designating separate subsections to discuss the realisation of each move. The English literature essays (20+20) using the 'Exposition-Discussion' model is discussed after that. Three comparative (HGE+LGE) 'summary of results' sections is presented at the end of each of the three sets of essay discussions. A final discussion of the relationship between the literature and language essays is attempted at the end of the chapter.

Analysis of the overall generic structure is not shown separately as almost all the essays, with the exception of just a few, in both the data set were seen to possess the three-part structure: Introduction, Body and Conclusion. For the move analysis, texts have been marked with double and single square brackets. Double square brackets are used for the three part generic divisions (Introduction-Body-Conclusion). Single square brackets are used for move divisions together with their move labels. The next sections, therefore,

¹⁷ Due to space constraints in the Appendices, all the analysed essays could not be presented except one from each category. However, the whole set of analysed data can be made available if the reader wishes to see it.

discuss the move structure and move realisations only. Whenever exceptions to the norm in the generic structure occur they will be mentioned within the presented sections.

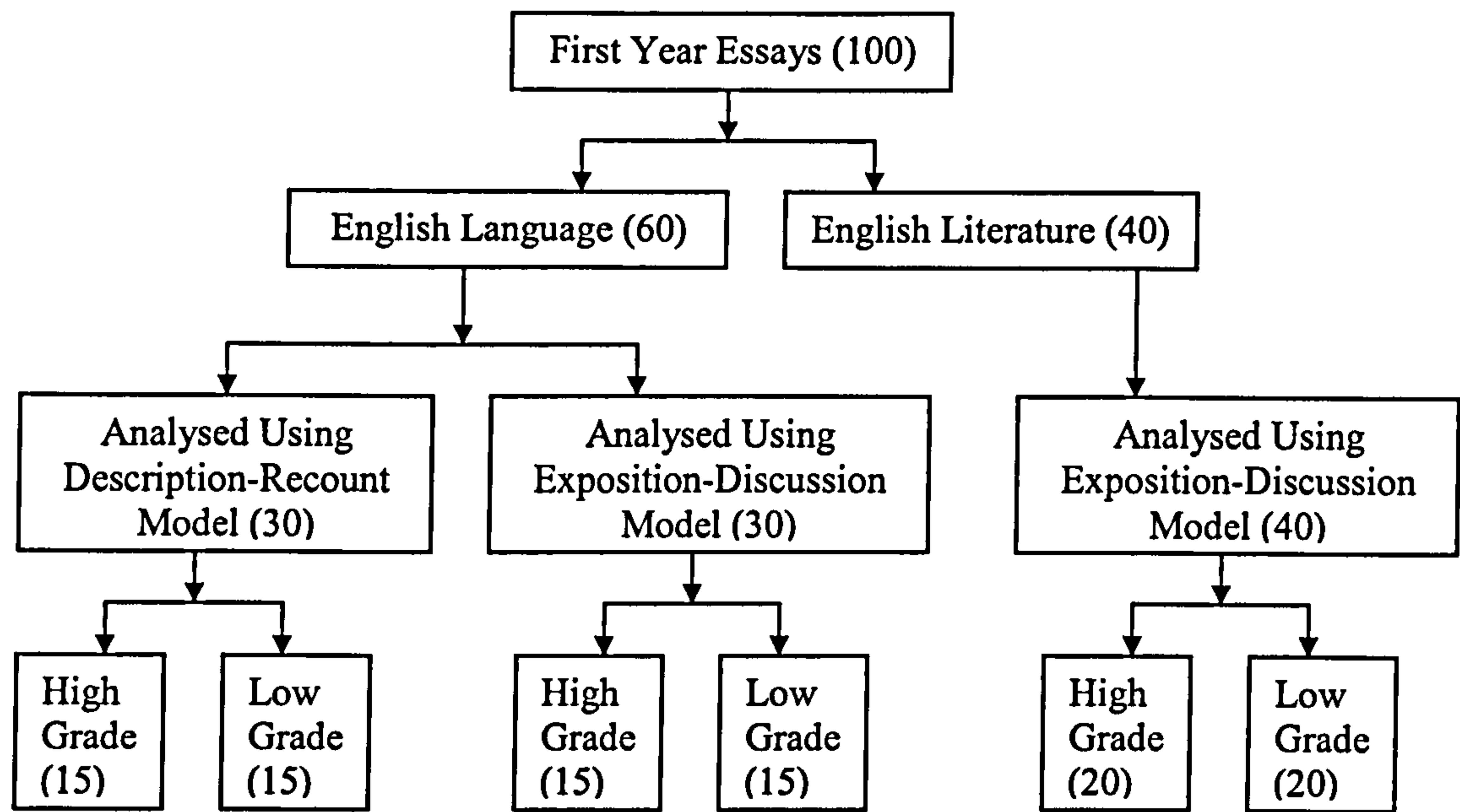


Figure-6.1: Distribution of essay data

6.1 Move structure and move realisation of English language

high grade essays (HGE) using the ‘Description-Recount’ model

In this section the 15 language HGE using ‘Description-Recount’ model were used. The ‘Description-Recount’ essays were seen to be shorter (approximately 450-500 words) than ‘Exposition-Discussion’ type essays. These essays were also found to be less complex structurally because students were required to write on aspects from actual experience based on personal narration which was also an observation made by Connors (1987). I present this type before because the ‘Description-Recount’ type essays were

more frequently written by students for the language course. This is evident from the language essay topics data (Appendix 2) and from the raw language essay data (with the researcher) that were collected. Essays within this category were both Recounts and Descriptions, sometimes both functions present in the same essay.

6.1.1 Move structure and realisation of language HGE 'Introduction'

I call this stage the Introduction because I found some of the essays having similar moves to the 'Exposition-Discussion' model (5.5.1.2). One move that remained absent from this data set was the Narrowing towards Proposition move (NTP). One obvious feature of these essay introductions was the inclination towards writing from personal experience.

The moves are illustrated with the examples from students' essays by giving the topics and excerpts of how student compose their Introductory paragraphs¹⁸. For readers' convenience, I present the Introduction section of the 'Description-Recount' model again (see 5.5, Table 5.6 for complete models):

¹⁸ The overall generic structure division is identified by double square brackets within the texts. The moves are identified with single square brackets.

Stage	M	Move	Strategy	S	Flexibility
Introduction	O	Opener	Giving Background information and/or	BI	Optional
			Making General Statement	GS	
	P	Proposition	Giving Personal Response/comment and/or	PR	Obligatory
			Defining and/or	D	
			Narrating Main Event/ Describing Main Issue	ME/MI	
	EP	Elaborating Proposition			Optional
	PD	Plan of Development			Optional

Table 6.1: ‘Introduction’ stage with moves and strategies of ‘Description-Recount’ model

6.1.1.1 ‘Opener’ move

Openers were found in 6 out of the 15 essays analysed. This move occurred in some essays when students would start with a very broad general statement or provide some general background information about the issue before writing about the main issue in detail in the rest of the paragraph and consecutive paragraphs. For example:

My visit to a famous place

[[[Bangladesh is a beautiful country.] O-GS [This country has many famous and historical places, like the sundarbans, sixty domes mosque in Bagerhat, grove of mango trees in Meharpur, Mahastangor in Bogra, sea-beach in cox-bazar, sea port in Chitagong etc. These places have both significant and historical value.] O-BI

[In 2003, me and my college friends visited "the grove of mango trees" in Meharpur.] P-ME]]

Excerpt 1

The first paragraph in the above excerpt gives two openers; it first provides a General Statement (GS) which has an evaluative function of the country and then moves on to give some Background Information (BI). Then the first sentence of the next paragraph provides the Proposition (P), so the Introduction moves from General-Particular in accordance with Hoey's (1983) Matching Relation pattern.

6.1.1.2 'Proposition' move

The Proposition (P) move appearing on its own only was found in 9 out of 15 essays, which was relatively more than the optional Opener (O) move. Hence, students directly went to the Proposition by making direct comments or expressing their feelings directly about the topic. And this was done in a number of ways: by giving Personal Response (PR), Definitions (D), narrating the main event (ME) or describing the main issue(MI). The following excerpt illustrates how the student begins with the Proposition of a personal Recount essay:

My Visit to a famous Place

[[[Last year, I visited a very famous place. Bagerhat is an ancient town and famous for the mazar of Khan Jahan Ali, once a mighty ruler of the area.] P-ME [He was a great saint too. He spread Islam in this town. He built the huge mosque of Bagerhat. Two large tanks also were dug by him. In 1997 UNESCO declared it a world heritage site.] EP]]

Excerpt 2

Students began essays narrating the very incident on the basis of which the whole essay is going to be written. The following essay illustrates how the whole paragraph is dedicated to the P by narrating/recounting the ME:

A Frightening Experience in your life

[[[Two younger brothers are under the knives of two monster like men; mother is tied tightly with the chair; another man is standing beside me with a sharp glittering knife touching my throat; the young boy, the servant of house is tied by two hand behind in the corner of the room and other three people are opening the drawers of the almirahs, wardrobes searching for valuable things and then taking them in their briefcase--- That is the most frightened site in my life which I can see even now before my eyes whenever I close them.]] P-ME

Excerpt 3 (Appendix 10)

When the paragraph is written using descriptions, the strategy applied is called describing main issue (MI). At times students also started P by defining the event to be described, what it meant to him/her as the following excerpt 4 illustrates:

Eid festival

[[[Eid is another name for recurring happiness or festivity. There are two eids: Eid-ul-fitr, celebrated on 1st of Shawwal following the month of fasting, Ramadan and Eid-ul-Azha celebrated on 10th of Zilhajj, following the course of hajj.] P-D [I would like to discuss about Eid-ul-fitr.] PD]]

Excerpt 4

6.1.1.3 ‘Elaborating Proposition’ move

The Elaborating Proposition (EP) move occurred quite frequently (8 essays), before students began to describe or narrate the series of events in the Body. This is illustrated in Excerpt 2 above in section 6.1.1.2

6.1.1.4 ‘Plan of Development’ move

Although Plan of Development (PD) was a move I did not expect to find, after analysis I saw that there was one essay in the high grade data that had this move, done in a brief way. In addition to that, expert opinion from teacher community thought it a good way of staying on track (8.2.2.3.1.ii). So I decided to include this move in my model, and inclusion of this optional move was not led from Labov’s or Derewianka’s study. Excerpt 4 gives an example of this move.

6.1.2 Move structure and realisation of language HGE ‘Body’

The ‘Body’ comprised a series of events (E) in chronological order or series of descriptions (D) and there were often cases when both were used. Students did not have any features like restating the thesis statement or any effort to prove any point. In these essays, the Body simply concentrated on telling or narrating or informing or describing the reader about an issue or first hand experience of events that may or may not be chronological. Technically, the Body is simple and, therefore, there was no need to distinguish the moves into strategies. These descriptions or retellings were often accompanied by personal views.

The moves identified in this part of the essay were the series of ‘Events/Descriptions’ and ‘Personal Response’ (PR). Again following Hoey’s pattern of General-Particular, the Body of the ‘Description-Recount’ essays possessed a series of particulars or examples or details of the Proposition (P) made in the Introduction.

Stage	M	Move		Flexibility
Body	E and/or	Series of Events/ and/or	Narrating events chronologically and/or	Obligatory
	D	Descriptions	describing different issues, things etc.	
	PR	Personal Response	Interjecting at different stages of the recount or description	Optional

Table 6.2: ‘Body’ stage with moves of ‘Description-Recount’ model

6.1.2.1 ‘Series of Events/ and Descriptions’ move

This is an obligatory Body move. The following excerpt illustrates how a series of Events (E) are described chronologically with occasional Description (D), and Personal Response (PR) moves, making their entry in between the E. This narration of details of what happened when and what they personally experienced is the most usual way students compose the ‘Description-Recount’ essay Body. The predominance of E is present in excerpt 5:

My visit to a famous place

...

[[[One morning in October last year my father, my younger sister and I went to Bagerhat. We got up in the morning to get ready for the journey. We hired a cab to visit the famous place. The cab started for Bagerhat on time. I sat beside a window to get finest air and watch the swift moving scenes. After half an hour we felt a bit hungry and we had light refreshment. At about 11:30 a.m we reached the ancient town.] E

[I was astounded at the sight of the great mosque.] PR [It was great in size and majestic in its structure. It is generally known as the mosque with sixty domes.] D [My sister and I started to count the domes] E....

Excerpt 5

Excerpt 6, on the other hand, presents only D of facts from one's actual experience with an occasional entry of PR move. Here, the time sequence is not used.

Our Seminar Library

...

[[[The seminar library is accommodated in one big room and it has got almirahs around the room against the walls to display books. For the sitting and reading purposes of the students there are many chairs and tables. Chairs are kept around the tables in the middle of the room. The room is airconditioned] D [and thus very comfortable for students during hot summer days.] PR

...

Excerpt 6

6.1.2.2 'Personal Response' move

This was an optional move that is often manifested in the Body of 'Description-Recount' essays. The personal involvement and indulgence was a conscious strategy of these kinds of essays and the writers made this feeling as clearly as possible in different parts of the essays. This move is clearly marked in both the above excerpts 5 and 6 of section 6.1.2.1.

6.1.3 Move structure and realisation of language HGE ‘Conclusion’

Labov’s (1972) ‘Result’ and ‘Coda’ are Concluding stages that mark the ending of narratives. My students’ essays had definite closing statements where they expressed their personal views, commented on or evaluated the issue or events they were writing on throughout the essay.

Stage	M	Move	Strategy	S	Flexibility
Conclusion	RP	Restating Proposition	Confirming Proposition and/or	CP	Obligatory
			Giving Personal Response and/or	PR	
			Making Suggestions	MS	

Table : 6.3 ‘Conclusion’ stage with moves and strategies of ‘Description-Recount’ model

6.1.3.1 ‘Restating Proposition’ move

Essays were concluded by the obligatory Restating Proposition (RP) which were in most cases realised by Personal Response (PR) strategy and sometimes by Making Suggestions (MS) as in the following examples respectively:

A Frightening Experience in my Life

...

[[To see someone die on spot like that is really horrifying and I have witnessed such a heartbreaking incident in front of my eyes which I consider the most frightening experience of my life.]] RP-PR

Excerpt 7

My visit to a famous place

...

[[[My visit to Maherpur was not only a good source of pleasure for its scenic beauty but also a good source of knowledge because I came to know and visit the sites that were of historical significance to my nation and its Independence.] RP-PR [So everybody should try to see historical places at home and abroad because they are good sources of pleasure and knowledge.]]] RP-MS

Excerpt 8

**6.2 Move structure and move realisation of English language
low grade essays (LGE) using the ‘Description-Recount’ model**

The analysis showed that ‘Description-Recount’ LGE and HGE did not differ much in their generic macro-structures. The tables of the moves with their strategical sub-moves will not be repeated in these sections as they have already been done in the above discussions.

6.2.1 Move structure and realisation of language LGE ‘Introduction’

As with the HGE, here also students started their essays with either providing some general information before moving to Proposition or by going straight into P. These are illustrated in the following sections.

6.2.1.1 ‘Opener’ move

From Table 6.1 it is found that the ‘Opener’ (O) moves can be General Statement or Background Information or both working side by side. The following excerpt shows how the student provides GS first about the sport and then proceeds to give a more detailed BI about the sport in Bangladesh in two paragraphs before trying to make an attempt at giving specific Propositional information at the end of paragraph 2, using Hoey’s General-Particular pattern. In one essay there was only O in the Introduction with no P as will be indicated in Table 6.4

Test victory of Bangladesh

[[[Cricket is a international and popular game. It is also a favourable game. In our country cricket is very popular game.] O-GS [Bangladesh gets test status in 2000.] O-BI

[At first the quality of Bangladeshi cricket team was not well. Players performance were not well. Bangladesh plays test series from 2001. Bangladesh played it's first test series against India on in its own land. In that series India won the series. After that Bangladesh could not win any match for four years.] O-BI [After four years from starting to play test series, Bangladesh won a test series on 2005.]]] P-ME

...

Excerpt 9

What is unusual in the above example will be clearly understood when P is discussed in section 6.2.2.1, excerpt 12.

6.2.1.2 'Proposition' move

In the above example P comes quite late in the essay. However, some writers provide the P right at the very beginning, as was seen in the HGE, through a 'Personal Response' strategy as the topic itself required experiential involvement. For example:

My favourite Teacher

[[[My favourite teacher is Mr Abdul Hakim. He is my college-teacher. He took our English class.] P-PR [There are some English teacher in our college.] O-BI [But all of them Mr Abdul Hakim is my favourite teacher.] P-PR [There are many reasons.]]] PD...

Excerpt 10

Another area to notice in Excerpt 10 is that after P the student gives an isolated BI and the again returns to P. The transition was from particular to general to particular again.

6.2.1.3 'Elaborating Proposition' move

Excerpt 11 shows an example of EP move, which is not frequently found; it elaborates on why the writer enjoyed the wedding party.

A Wedding Party I attended

[[[Every man enjoys different kinds of parties.] GS [From my childhood I have been enjoying various parties like cultural party, birthday party, wedding party etc. Among such programmes, I remember a wedding party I attended last year.] O-BI [This wedding party was of my uncle. He was the student of the department of English at Dhaka University.] P-PR [Last year when I got myself admitted into the English Department at University of Dhaka, my uncle got married. For this reason, the wedding party gives me much pleasure.] EP [How wonderful match it is!] PR

Excerpt 11

6.2.1.4 'Plan of Development' move

Like EP, this was also a move that rarely occurred. However, it can be seen in Excerpt 10.

6.2.2 Move structure and realisation of language LGE 'Body'

As seen before in the HGE, here also the Body is developed by series of events or descriptions (E/D) with occasional comments made by the writers of their feelings and engaging the reader with their personal emotional state.

6.2.2.1 'Series of Events/Descriptions' move

Excerpt 12 is the only Body paragraph that the student managed to produce in this essay.

The earlier part of the essay is presented in section 6.2.1.1, excerpt 9.

Test victory of Bangladesh

...

[[[In the 1st match Bangladesh won the match by 226 runs. In that match Bangladesh made a huge number of run in its 1st innings and the bowlers showed their best performance on that innings. Bangladesh team showed their best performance in the end innings too and then Bangladesh won their 1st match.] E [It is really a great joy to the people of our country.] PR

Excerpt 12

Unlike the former example, the following is an example of an essay which has too many short Body paragraphs dedicated to the series of D of the favourite teacher, which starts from the very first paragraph of the essay. The following excerpt is a continuation of the Introduction that I presented in section 6.2.1.2, excerpt 10 (See Appendix 11 for complete essay).

My favourite Teacher

... [[[He taught our lessons very friendly. He was also amiable. He was very serious about our lessons and our development. He taught us in a such way that we understood his lectures very easily. It also helped us to understood our lessons. Sometimes he told us short moral stories. It gave us important lessons about our practised life. It also helped us to face the difficulties of our life.

When he took his class he was very attentive in the classroom. We were also attentive in his class. He didnot like inattentive students. He said that attention is the pre-condition of a good result.

He did not like the people who tell lies. He always says "To tell a lie is a great sin. Never tell a lie".] D

...

Excerpt 13 (Appendix 11)

Excerpt 13 has a series of D. The former paragraphs have lists of isolated descriptions whereas the latter ones are more or less developed. The latter descriptions have the General-particular pattern with a statement made and an explanation, a move that is also found in 'Exposition-Discussion' essays.

6.2.2.2 ‘Personal Response’ move

PR move is illustrated in excerpt 12, at the end of the paragraph. In another essay, Excerpt 14, ‘The course I enjoy most in the First year’, the student starts by giving the personalised perspective at the very outset in the Body and then proceeds to list the reasons why he/she enjoys the course.

The course I enjoy most in the First year

...

[[[I think 102 course is the easiest course in first year] PR, [Because if we know about how to identity the figure of speech, what is the defination of them, and if we practice a lot one can enjoyed this course.] D

...

Excerpt 14

6.2.3 Move structure and realisation of language LGE ‘Conclusion’

There are conclusions in ‘Description-Recount’ LGE too, but some of them are not realised appropriately. The sense of finishing off remains incomplete in a number of the essays as will be discussed in the next sections.

6.2.3.1 ‘Restating Proposition’ move

In the ‘Test victory of Bangladesh’ topic Conclusion, the student begins with a restatement of the Proposition (this is the only essay in the Description-Recount HGE and LGE, 15+15, corpus that had the Confirming Proposition CP strategy to realise RP) but continues to provide extra pieces of information that do not fit into rhetorical

function of a Conclusion; it is infact a misplaced Background Information Opener. The following is a complete Conclusion to the essay.

Test victory of Bangladesh

...

[[[Bangladesh won that test series against Zimbabwe] RP-CP [and Habibul basher was the captain of Bangladesh team and Mohammad Rafique was the man of the match on that series. Tatenta taibu was the captain of Zimbabwe team.]]] O-BI

Excerpt 15

6.2.4 Summary of results

Table 6.4 below summarises the main findings between English Language Recount-Description High Grade and Low Grade Essays in terms of their move occurrences and with some of the strategies to show clearly how differences and similarities appeared among the HGE and LGE.

It should be noted that most of the HGE realised its Introductions with P mainly and some with both O and P, whereas the LGE even had an Introduction with only O. In the LGE, O and P combination was done in an imbalanced way. EP and PD were looked at separately, not with or without O/P. The same was with PR move in Body, it was seen independently of the E and D moves. Like O and P, D and E were studied whether they appeared together or just on their own.

			Eng. Lang Description- Recount HGE	Eng. Lang Description- Recount LGE
Stages	Move & move order		Total (15)	Total (15)
Introduction	Opener (<i>only</i>)		0	1
	Proposition (<i>without Opener</i>)		9	4
	Opener + Proposition		6	10*
	Elaborating Proposition		8	1
	Plan of Development		1	2
Body	Descriptions (<i>only, without E</i>)		4	6
	Events (<i>only, without D</i>)		0	5
	Descriptions + Events		11	4
	Personal Response		15	14**
Conclusion	Restating Proposition***	Confirming Proposition	0	1
		Personal Response	11	10
		Making Suggestions	1	0
		Personal Response + Making Suggestions	3	4

Table 6.4: A comparative summary of the frequency of move realisations in English language ‘Description-Recount’ high grade and low grade essays

- * Overuse of O
- ** 1 essay had only series of Descriptions
- *** Move accompanied by its strategies

6.3 Move structure and move realisation of English language high grade essays (HGE) using ‘Exposition-Discussion’ model

In this section, I discuss the 15 language HGE that were analysed using the ‘Exposition-Discussion’ based model. Like the above section, in this section also all the moves and the strategies used to realise the moves are discussed in separate sub-sections.

6.3.1 Move structure and realisation of language HGE ‘Introduction’

All essays had Introductions. However, the introduction was not restricted to a single paragraph. 6 essays out of 15 were seen to have a number of paragraphs for the Introduction.

The ‘Introduction’ according to the ‘Exposition-Discussion’ based model possessed a number of moves, with P being the only obligatory move where students would give the thesis statement. Students seemed to use all the moves except PD. Only 2 essays in this set of data possessed this move. The following figure illustrates the moves and their strategies of the Introduction of ‘Exposition-Discussion’ based model:

‘Exposition-Discussion’ model

Stage	M	Move	Strategy	S	Flexibility
Introduction	O	Opener	Gambit and/or	G	Optional
			Background Information and/or	BI	
			Definition and/or	D	
			General Statement	GS	
	NTP	Narrowing towards Proposition			Optional
	P	Proposition	Stating Thesis or	ST	Obligatory
			Stating Claim	SC	
	EP	Elaborating Proposition			Optional
	PD	Plan of Development			Optional

Table 6.5: ‘Introduction’ stage with moves and strategies of ‘Exposition-Discussion’ model

6.3.1.1 'Opener' move

Among the 15 essays, 13 began with O; only two began with P straight away. The O were realised in different ways, mostly done using GS, BI, and D. Most of the essays were seen to use a broad GS or BI about the topic or define a specific term related to the topic and then move on to P. 4 essays had G in form of anecdotes, rhetorical question and quotation. Excerpt 16 illustrates this general tendency of using multiple O for introducing the topic:

Q. Industrial progress is affecting the environment in a negative way. Do you agree?

[[[This is the age of industrialization.] O-GS [Statistics shows that the world is now similar to a house made of glass where the human beings and animals are trapped in it. They will soon come to the end of their lives because the green-house effect has already started its actions.] O-BI [Can not we do anything in order to protest these terminations?] O-G ...

Excerpt 16

Sometimes O reappears in the second paragraph even after having finished its function as in the following excerpt 17. 3 more essays out of 15 were seen to do this. Excerpt 17 however, shows how the Introduction continued till the middle of the second paragraph.

Private Universities in Bangladesh- Advantage and Disadvantage

[[[Private universities issue, perhaps, is the most controversial issue of the time.] O-GS [We have talked much about the merits and demerits of public universities without any conclusion.] NTP [Judged by today's demand and standard, private universities are must for us; but the expensive and rather low quality academic standard keep us in apprehension.] P-ST [Keeping the ever-increasing demand of new educational institutions in mind, we will have to establish private universities under strict rules. The private universities will have to reduce shortage of faculties, fascilities and structures.] EP

[During the early 90's acute shortage of higher educational institutions were felt. The exparts gave opinion that Bangladesh was in dire need of private universities and a new law should be enacted to establish private universities. In 1992, the first private university was established.]]] **O-BI [[[Most of the demands of higher education was fulfilled in the earlier institutions.] SP [These institutions appeared to be very fruitful**

Excerpt 17

6.3.1.2 'Narrowing towards Proposition' move

4 essays had NTP. Excerpts 17 and 18 are examples. I assume because students used multiple O to reach P they felt a proper NTP was not required. So, sometimes the different O acted as narrowing down towards proposition. The following excerpt is a good example of how the writer narrows down to P by giving his/her point of view of the contrasting conditions of the two generations:

Q. How is your generation different from your parents' and grandparents' generation? Does the generation gap create problems for you?

[[[" But mother, I will not be late, can I go , please?" My mother gave me a stern cold look saying that it is the last time she would allow me to go out for a long drive, I sometimes wonder if I am the only miserable child in this world who has to fight with her parents every now and then to convince them that she only wants to have a good time with her friends.] O-G [Sadly enough, the number of the wretched children is a lot more than just a few. The scenario was even worse in my parents' time when the children were not even allowed to leave the neighbourhood.] NTP [However, things have changed over the years and it is about time that parents changed over the years and it is about time that parents should know how they unwillingly cause their children to suffer by being too authoritative.]]] P-ST ...

Excerpt 18 (Appendix 12)

6.3.1.3 'Proposition' move

Only 2 'Exposition-Discussion' based essays began with P straight-away. Most of them had some form of setting established before reaching P. P is expressed in form of ST or SC. The following Excerpt 19 is followed from the long opening of excerpt 16:

Q. Industrial progress is affecting the environment in a negative way. Do you agree?

... [Man's life has been proved is be futile. Because it is human being who has created mills, factories and industries and now they are suffering the consequences. The effect is far-stretching.] P-ST [The more industrialization gets spread all over the world, the world becomes more and more polluted and therefore extinction of human beings, animals and plants are now quite difficult.]]] EP

Excerpt 19

Often P is found in a new paragraph. Excerpt 20 has P in the third paragraph after two O in two separate paragraphs.

Private Universities in Bangladesh- Advantage and Disadvantage

[[[Ami, a H.S.C. appeared student from a rich family. Topu, also a H.S.C. appeared student, but from a middle class family. Ami could not managed to get admitted in public university. So what! He can afford the expenses of a private university, after that a bright future. On the other hand, Topu, same fate like Ami, but as he is from middle class family, he could not afford to get admitted in private university . He has to lose his one year, but his future is uncertain. These are the main focus of private universities in our country.] O-G [Now-a-days, private universities are important issues for our students.

With the outburst of population of our country, some people feel that the public universities with vast area should be withdrawn. Thus, we now think of universities in a narrow five or six storied building. For this reason, may be, the rich people produce the idea of private universities.] O-BI

[Though the private universities are negatively focused in our country, these universities have some effective advantages in our educational society.]]] P-ST

Excerpt 20

6.3.1.4 'Elaborating Proposition' move

These P were mostly followed by EP as is evident from the above excerpts 17 and 19.

Most probably the elaborations help students to connect with the Body.

6.3.1.5 ‘Plan of Development’ move

This was not a commonly found move among the essays. I thought that it was a good way of signalling to the reader what will follow next and what can be expected in the Body. This was indicated as obligatory in Hyland’s (1990) model of argumentative essays and was also emphasised by my teacher interviewees (Chapter 8, 8.2.2.3.1.ii). The following essay, however, attempts to use the move in a brief manner.

Q ...
[But now a lot of changes happen all over the country which are responsible for creating generation gaps.] SP [The reasons will be explained below:] PD]]

Excerpt 21

6.3.2 Move structure and realisation of language HGE ‘Body’

This part of the essay possessed the following recursive move pair, both being obligatory:

Stage	M	Move	Strategy	S	Flexibility
Body Move pair SP^ESP is recursive The strategies can take any order	SP	Supporting Proposition			Obligatory
	ESP	Elaborating Supporting Proposition	Giving Evidence and/or	Ev	Obligatory
			Explaining Evidence and/or	Ex	
			Giving Evidence & Explaining at the same time	EvEx	

Table 6.6: ‘Body’ stage with moves and strategies of ‘Exposition-Discussion’ model

In this section of the essay Hoey's (1983) matching relation General-Particular pattern of moves was identifiable. Often the SP was seen to take on the generalised statement echoing the P, and the ESP (Evidence and Explanation) became the particular evidence to elaborate and support the general view.

6.3.2.1 'Supporting Proposition' move

The Body in most essays began with the SP. Different SP were found to be reiterated in most Body paragraphs as topic sentences, occurring sometimes at the beginning, middle or the end. As for example, the following excerpt 22 is seen to follow different techniques skilfully of presenting SP.

Q. How is your generation different from your parents' and grandparents' generation?

Does the generation gap create problems for you?

...

It goes without saying that the recent generation is more educated than their parents and grandparents.] SP [This often creates several problems among them. The grandparents are more superstitious than the parents where the young generation depends on realism. This individualism creates a gap or separation eventually. For example, now a days people don't believe in unexperienced village doctors. In villages, the old people often depends on their fake treatment. As a result, most of them often die for mal-treatment. Many pregnant women in village are treated to unexperienced doctors and eventually, they deliver dead children. Such a serious and frightening problem lies with superstitions. Furthermore, many village people depends on many "kobiraj" and their prescriptions for the treatment of their mentally disordered children.] ESP-EvEx

[On the other hand, the young citizens of the country are much more science depending. They believe that these unexperienced doctors do nothing to the patients and the situation of the patients and the situation of patient becomes more serious.] ESP-EvEx [Thus, the clash between the young and generation increases more.] SP ...

Excerpt 22

6.3.2.2 'Elaborating Supporting Proposition' move

Most of the high grade language essays showed features of SP move developing into ESP realised by its pair of EvEx strategy as is evident in excerpt 22 in Section 6.3.2.1.

The following excerpt shows how ESP comes before SP:

Q. How is your generation different from your parents' and grandparents' generation? Does the generation gap create problems for you?

...

[A friend of mine used to sneak out from her house since her parents never allowed her to leave home. They were extremely commanding and never allowed her to go anywhere without them. She fell into bad company and got addicted to drugs. Her parents were furious and sent her to a rehabilitation centre.] ESP-EvEx [Parents who are overprotective, unwillingly ruin the lives of their children when their best intention is to give them a better future.] SP ...

Excerpt 23 (Appendix 12)

6.3.3 Move structure and realisation of language HGE 'Conclusion'

Conclusions were found in a separate new paragraph and all essays had them. Very few essays seemed to have Restating Proposition move. Students often had the optional BP move realised by PR, MS or MP strategies. Although my own language data showed that BP was more frequently occurring, previous studies, in addition to literature essay data, led me to label RP as obligatory. Students writing language essays seemed more comfortable giving suggestions and making future predictions from a personal point of view. The Conclusion moves are:

Stage	M	Move	Strategy	S	Flexibility
Conclusion The sequence of the moves and strategies is also not fixed	RP	Restating Proposition	Consolidation of Ideas and/or	CI	Obligatory
			Confirming Proposition and/or	CP	
			Elaborating confirmed Proposition	ECP	
	BP	Beyond Proposition	Personal Response and/or	PR	Optional
			Making Suggestions and/or	MS	
			Making Predictions and/or	MP	
			Widening Proposition	WP	

Table 6.7: ‘Conclusion’ stage with moves and strategies of ‘Exposition-Discussion’ model

6.3.3.1 ‘Restating Proposition’ move

9 essays used the RP-CP/CI move strategies. Unlike the literature Exposition-Discussion essays, here even if students used CP or CI strategies, a sense of the firm personal opinion came through. And most of the time they were followed with BP move strategies as is done in the following excerpt:

Q. Industrial progress is affecting the environment in a negative way. Do you agree?

...

[[So we see, as days are passing the environment is being polluted in a serious way.] RP-CP [Industrial progress, I think is the main cause of this pollution.] BP-PR [We must ensure that we protect our environment.] BP-MS]]

Excerpt 24

6.3.3.2 'Beyond Proposition' move

11 of the Conclusions used the BP move realised by responding personally, PR, or by predicting something, MP, for the future and taking a position to the central issue. This was most of the time followed by a recommendation, MS, of what needed to be done.

...

[[[As the new generation is the future of a nation, they have several effective steps to take] BP-MS [Though in the past people were more illiterate , they have lack of knowledge about education. So, the young generation have to be more aware of this matter.] BP-PR [They have to convince their parents and grandparents about the reality of the world and the importance of learning education. Their mutual understanding will remove all the problems facing in their life] BP-MS [Thus, there will be a gap or separation-free nation with the rapid knowledge related to the reality.]] BP-MP

Excerpt 25

These language HGE will be understood better if compared with the analysis of the LGE. Hence, the next sections describe the structural organisation of LGE using 'Exposition-Discussion' based model.

6.4 Move structure and move realisation of English language low grade essays (LGE) using the 'Exposition-Discussion' based model

Among the 15 essays analysed all had the 3 part structure. The essays ranged from 300-440 words. It is obvious that the LGE will have problems in language expressions,

grammar and content matter. However, again the problems were not confined there. Most of the essays had the moves as in HGE but there was a complete disorder in the sequence of the moves. It was very difficult to determine where the moves were and where to draw the boundary line for the macro structure.

6.4.1 Move structure and realisation of language LGE 'Introduction'

6.4.1.1 'Opener' move

14 out of 15 essays began with O, 13 of which were realised by GS strategy and only 1 with BI. The following excerpt 26 shows how the student opens with general statement, then presents the main thesis and again goes back to GS not able to develop further.

Q. How is your generation different from your parents' and grandparents' generation? Does the generation gap create problems for you?

[[[At present, everything is changing so rapidly. So many new things are coming to our life.] O-GS [The young generation are happy to get these modern things. But the old generation are not in a welcome mode to these things.] P-ST [They are little bit unhappy and disappointed to have all these modern things which, they think break down the old customs and menners.] EP [So, by the course of rapid changing, the generation gap is increasing and creating many problems.]]] O-GS ...

Excerpt 26 (Appendix 13)

Excerpt 27 shows how the Introduction comprises four isolated Openers separated into four isolated (two two-sentences and two one-sentence) paragraphs. There is nothing wrong with the moves but they are all disconnected. The ideas do not flow, make no sense and do not hang together at all. The last line is simply a repetition of the title. This

is a frequently occurring practice in the LGE. I faced great confusion in labelling these moves. Students think that through this repetition of the title or the topic, they are realising P.

Private Universities in Bangladesh- Advantages and Disadvantages

[[[Univeristy is one of the ending point of a student life. We get higher education from the University.] O-GS

[In Bangladesh we have two types of University. One is government and another one is private university.] O-BI

[In Bangladesh private universities are available.] O-BI

[In private universities also have advantages and disadvantages.]]] O-GS

...

Excerpt 27

6 of the Introductions had only O without P. Students kept giving lots of general information but could not come to the central topic.

6.4.1.2 ‘Narrowing towards Proposition’ move

8 out of 15 essays had NTP move which is evident from excerpt 28.

Q. Industrial progress is affecting the environment in a negative way. Do you agree?

[[[Now this century is the time of industrial revulation] O-GS [More and more industries are being set up by people . These industries produce different products that bring comfort to our life. But we can't be happy with this at all.] NTP [Because the industries are polluting our most essential element water and air. And thus pollutes our environment.]]] P-ST ...

Excerpt 28

6.4.1.3 ‘Proposition’ move

Essays had P, most of the times after the openers and in the first paragraph as seen in excerpts 26 and 28, sometimes in the second paragraph. However, there were instances when students simply repeated the wordings of the question or the title thinking that they were realising P as evidenced in the essay of Excerpt 27 and 29. The student thinks that the last sentence of excerpt 27 is P and the first sentence of excerpt 29 is P. The whole essay of excerpt 27 and 29 did not provide a proper P except such repetitions. The same happened in the Body. By repeating the title students probably felt they have done P and SP. As a result, 6 essays simply did not possess P, and 2 had misplaced P which were in the middle of the Body sections.

Private Universities in Bangladesh- Advantage and Disadvantage

...

[There are many private university in our country. They have some advantages and disadvantages] O-BI [Now let us discuss about the advantages of private university.]]

PD

...

Excerpt 29

6.4.1.4 ‘Elaborating Proposition’ move

Once P is made not too many essays provide any elaboration. 4 essays had EP.

6.4.1.5 ‘Plan of Development’ move

3 essays were seen to attempt at PD briefly. Excerpt 29 ends the Introduction with PD.

6.4.2 Move structure of realisation of language LGE ‘Body’

6.4.2.1 ‘Supporting Proposition’ move

In most of the essays the Body tended to begin with SP as in excerpt 30 followed by ESP.

Q. How is your generation different from your parents' and grandparents' generation?
Does the generation gap create problems for you?

.....[Thus the gap between old and new generation is also increasing.] SP
[There are also a gap between old and young generation in accepting western civilization.]
SP [The people of old generation are not wanted western civilization rather they hate it
very much. But the young people are always in a mode of accept everything which is
available in western civilization.]]] ESP-EvEx ...

Excerpt 30 (Appendix 13)

As with P, another characteristic of low grade Exposition-Discussion language Body was that throughout the paragraph students kept repeating or restating the topic thinking he/she has done SP, as is done in Excerpt 30, in the first line.

6.4.2.2 ‘Elaborating Supporting Proposition’ move

One major drawback of the Body paragraphs in these LGE was the lack of analytical depth of the information in the ESP, as is evident in most of the essays. The points or arguments meant to be discussed are not explained or elaborated completely, they are simply touched upon. The attempt is there but students seem not to be able to examine the issue in depth. In the following excerpt 31, the student gives a list of the

developments of modern science and does not focus on the negative effects until much later. The SP-ESP move pair is frequently impaired.

Q. Industrial progress is affecting the environment in a negative way. Do you agree?

...

[God created the world and the world now going on systemically. In the past time, we were in the darkness. After the invention of education of electric balbs darkness has removed.]

ESP-EvEx

[Once people used horse to communicate with others. But now a days bus, train, air planes do it easily.] ESP- EvEx

...

Excerpt 31

6.4.3 Move structure and realisation of language LGE 'Conclusion'

All the essays had conclusions. Even in the LGE students were seen to provide personal responses.

6.4.3.1 'Restating Proposition' move

Only one essay had a single line Conclusion confirming the proposition. 7 essays had Conclusions with a mix of RP and BP moves as in excerpt 32.

...

[[[The generation gap between old and young generation is increasing very rapidly.] RP-CP [It is not wanted.] BP-PR [The old people should be more generouse and at the same time the young people need to have some respect for their parents and grandparents generation. Thus the gap between old and new generation should break down.]]] BP-MS

Excerpt 32 (Appendix 13)

6.4.3.2 ‘Beyond Proposition’ move

7 essays had Conclusions realised by optional BP moves only. Like the HGE, most essay Conclusions had a personal response towards the central proposition and making recommendations for future development or improvements to be made. Among the BP move students mainly used PR, MS and MP strategies.

6.4.4 Summary of results

Table 6.8 below summarises the main findings between English Language Exposition-Discussion High Grade and Low Grade Essays in terms of their move occurrences and with some of the strategies to show clearly how differences and similarities appeared among the HGE and LGE.

It was difficult to neatly put the frequency of move occurrences into the table because students had several misplaced moves. For instance, identifying O and P in the middle of Body paragraphs was a common feature in both HGE as well as LGE. The SP-ESP moves also created problems particularly for analysing the LGE, because students had wrong conceptions when repeating the titles and often, there was no consistent development of ESP from SP. The footnotes, thus, became essential to understanding of the Table figures.

		Eng. Lang Exposition- Discussion HGE	Eng. Lang Exposition- Discussion LGE
Stages	Move & Move order	Total (15)	Total (15)
Introduction	Opener (<i>only</i>)	0	6
	Proposition (<i>without O</i>)	2	1
	Opener + Proposition	13*	8**
	Narrowing Towards Proposition	4	8
	Elaborating Proposition	7	4
	Plan of Development	2	3
Body	Supporting Proposition	15	10***
	Elaborating Supporting Proposition	15	15****
Conclusion	Restating Proposition (<i>only</i>)	4	1
	Beyond Proposition(<i>only</i>)	6	7
	Restating Proposition + Beyond Proposition	5	7

Table 6.8: A Comparative summary of the frequency of move realisations in English language ‘Exposition-Discussion’ high grade and low grade essays

- * 4 misplaced O were found in Body paragraphs
- ** 2 were found in middle of Body paragraphs
- *** Often done by repeating topic title/question
- **** Often no consistent SP-ESP move pair relationship

6.5 Move structure and move realisation of English literature high grade essays (HGE) using the ‘Exposition-Discussion’ based model

All the essays seemed to possess the three part structure, with the exception of a few essays where the conclusions got merged with the end of the Body. Otherwise, the emphasis of the Introduction-Body-Conclusion is always felt. The literature essay topics were primarily identified as ‘Compare-Contrast’, ‘Position-Reason’ and ‘Evaluate’ which could all be analysed using the ‘Exposition-Discussion’ based model. Most of the HGE showed noticeable evidence of students’ ability to explore and analyse all the sides of an issue, structure the different points in logical order, relate them to the central topic and offer an interpretation that may or may not require taking of a position.

6.5.1 Move structure and realisation of literature HGE ‘Introduction’

The same Introduction framework applied to discuss the Language essays in section 6.3.1 is used here. It is presented again for the readers’ convenience.

‘Exposition-Discussion’ model

Stage	M	Move	Strategy	S	Flexibility
Introduction	O	Opener	Gambit and/or	G	Optional
			Background Information and/or	BI	
			Definition and/or	D	
			General Statement	GS	
	NTP	Narrowing towards Proposition			Optional
	P	Proposition	Stating Thesis or	ST	Obligatory
			Stating Claim	SC	
	EP	Elaborating Proposition			Optional
	PD	Plan of Development			Optional

Table 6.9: ‘Introduction’ stage with moves and strategies of ‘Exposition-Discussion’ model

6.5.1.1 ‘Opener’ move

I found from my students’ essay Introductions that most of the time they would start with ‘Opener’ moves, which were mostly relevant to the central idea and had a proportionate balance in the amount of information provided with the rest of the essay. At times students chose to use one, only ‘Gambit’, as in excerpt 33 ¹⁹ in form of a catchy quotation from the author of the literary text which was quite relevant to the topic before going into the thesis, and at other times some students used more than one optional strategies like, ‘Background Information’, ‘Definition’, ‘General Statement’, as in excerpt 34. This pattern coincided with Hoey’s (1983) General-Particular matching

¹⁹ For complete analysed essay see Appendix 14

relation pattern. These openers revealed that the source of information required to realise this move was secondary source, because a lot depended on knowledge about the authors' lives, age, time and so on.

Q. Identify the conflict between Larry and his father and comment on its resolution.

Ans . [[["Story telling doesn't deal with problems; it doesn't have any solutions to offer ; it just states the human condition," says Frank O' Connor himself.] **O-G** [In his largely autobiographical short story "My Oedipus Complex", Connor depicts the Oedipal problem faced by Larry Deleaney after his father returns home from the war.]]] **P-ST**

Excerpt 33 (Appendix 14)

An essay where the writer has used a couple of openers together is illustrated in the Introduction of Excerpt 34. It uses among other Opener strategies the BI strategy and it is used quite relevantly. BI was the most frequently used strategy among the Openers.

Q. Discuss how "The Sun Rising" shows a successful fusion of wit and passion.

[[[John Donne is best known among the Metaphysical poets for his successful blending of wit and passion. He intentionally ignores conventional standards of poetry and concentrates instead on shocking his readers with unexpected turns of phrase and outrageous conceits. Donne's poems are as much about intellect as they are about emotion. It would be incorrect to blame him, as the Romantics did, for pursuing the former at the expense of the latter. T.S. Eliot pointed out three centuries later that Donne and the Metaphysicals were the last group of poets able to unify these two strains into a single poetic consciousness.] **O-BI**

[Wit is the capacity to make brilliant, imaginative and intelligent connections between dissimilar ideas, with verbal deftness. Dr. Johnson defined wit as,

"Heterogeneous ideas... yoked by violence together."

Wit finds its expression through puns, epigrams, metaphors and paradoxes.] **O-D** [Love poetry, whether metaphysical or not, must inevitably contain emotion.] **O-GS** ["The Sun Rising" being a metaphysical love poem places equal emphasis on the intellectual agility of the poet as on his passion for the lady.]]] **P-ST**

Excerpt 34

However, even within these HGE some used the BI opener that was realised with irrelevant information. Hence, opening of Introduction with background information not related to the topic but to the author of the text was also found. This occurred quite frequently in the essays, both high and low grade ones. An illustration is shown below:

Q. Write on the importance of the houses in *Pride and Prejudice*.

[[[*Pride and Prejudice* is a sparkling picture of Jane Austen's limited social world away from the aggressive London, in which a variety of human types are interlinked to each other through various degrees of closeness.] O-BI

Excerpt 35

Even though my students were novice writers writing in a different genre, there was the same tendency that Swales observed with his RA expert writers. Here too, the openers had the tendency to create topic generalisation in order to ‘establish a territory’ as seen in Swales Move 1. Instead of starting with the P right away students chose to begin with either/multiple strategy options, that is, G/D/BI/GS.

6.5.1.2 ‘Narrowing towards Proposition’ move

‘Narrowing towards Proposition’ move was not frequently used by students, but when it was used its purpose was of bridging the broad opening with the central idea of the essay. An example is in the following:

Q. Compare and contrast between "Aunt Jenifer" and "the protagonist of living in sin."

[[[Adrienne Rich, an American poet, is best known for her active movement in politics and social affairs specially women affairs. Feminism and male domination are the major themes of her poetry]. O-BI [Her two remarkable poems "Aunt Jenifer's tigers" and "Living In Sin", belong to feminist literary genre.] NTP

[In these two poems Rich shows us the women who are trapped in male domination. Here she creates two characters from different age, through whom she shows us the life of oppressed woman. One is Aunt Jenifer and another is the Protagonist of living in Sin. Though she presents them in different manner, they have some major similarities in their life besides the disimilarities.] P-ST

Excerpt 36

6.5.1.3 'Proposition' move

In most cases, 'Opener/s' preceded Proposition as illustrated in excerpts 33, 34, 35, 36 above. Only 3 essays out of twenty literature HGE opened the Introduction with P directly. This is illustrated in the following excerpt 37:

Q. Identify and explain the significance of "It is a truth universally acknowledge that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife."

[[[This is the opening sentence of the novel *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen and stands as one of the most famous lines in literature. Even as it briskly introduces the arrival of Mr. Bingley at Netherfield, the event that sets the novel in motion, this sentence also offers a miniature sketch of the entire plot, which concerns itself with the pursuit of rich eligible bachelors by various female characters.]P-ST

Excerpt 37

Another noticeable aspect was that often Introductions were not confined to one paragraph, unlike Matsuzono's (2004) TWE essay findings, and sometimes even possessed three paragraphs as evident in excerpt 34. Propositions were not found in the

first paragraph in 7 essays. 4 essays had P beginning in a new paragraph, as in excerpts 36 and 38. It seemed as if these students felt they needed to say the central idea in a new paragraph.

Q. From your reading of *The Nun's Priest's Tale*, give a critical assessment of the poem. Do you like the poem? Give reasons for your answer.

...

[Chaucer has very nicely juxtaposed humble matters of comedy with elevated elements of tragedy in 'The Nun's Priest's Tale' which makes it enjoyable to lovers of literature.]]] P-ST

...

Excerpt 38

6.5.1.4 'Elaborating Proposition' move

This move was seen to occur in 7 essays. Most likely students felt there was a need to develop the thesis statement a little further which would act as a link with the Body of the essay. An example is the following:

Q. Discuss Matthew Arnold's poem as criticism of life.

[[["Wave us away, thy keep solitude", Arnold in 'The Scholar Gipsy' advises the innocent, ideal scholar gipsy to flee away from the modern life, otherwise, he says to the gipsy, "thy cheer would die... thy glad perennial youth would fade".] O-G [Arnold, in his poems, criticises modern life, and certainly his poems bear a mark of melancholy, sad poems where despair and a sense of loss dominate.] P-ST [In his style of criticising modern life, he is never a bully, but interestingly is always ironic and courteous. To him, modern life is fatal and hopeless.] EP

Excerpt 39

6.5.1.5 ‘Plan of Development’ move

This move appeared only in one HGE, which proved that students did not think it was necessary to make PD explicit to the reader or that they were simply unaware of it. Hyland (1990) also considers it as an optional element in the structure of his argumentative essays but nevertheless identifies it as important in “signposting its subsequent direction” (p.71). An example of this rarely occurring move is the following:

Q. Is Eliot's "The love song of J. Alfred Prufrock" a love poem? Justify your answer.

...

[Now to justify whether the poem is a love song or not, we are badly in need of a synopsis of the themes buttressed by the poem.]]] PD

...

Excerpt 40

6.5.2 Move structure and realisation of literature HGE ‘Body’

The Body framework used to discuss the Language essays is used for literature essays as well. Table 6.10 illustrates the Body section again for readers’ convenience.

Stage	M	Move	Strategy	S	Flexibility
Body	SP	Supporting Proposition			Obligatory
	ESP	Elaborating Supporting Proposition	Giving Evidence and/or	Ev	Obligatory
			Explaining Evidence and/or	Ex	
			Giving Evidence & Explaining at the same time	EvEx	

Table 6.10: ‘Body’ stage with moves and strategies of ‘Exposition-Discussion’ model

One interesting finding in this section was that many of the Body paragraphs began in a similar fashion, with linguistic features that signal their transition from Introduction to the main body by referring to the main text they were writing on. Such exophoric references (references to the literary text being discussed) acting as frame markers that went on to a development of the essay, were found in the Body of 11 of the 20 essays as the following examples show:

- “In this story....” (Appendix 14)
- “From the beginning of the story...”
- “The poem starts dramatically...”
- “The sonnet begins...”
- “As the title suggests...”
- “ ‘On First Looking at Chapman’s Homer’ exhibits ...”
- “At the beginning...”
- “The tale begins by the introduction...”
- “He begins his poem with...”
- “The play begins with...”
- “In “Why I write” Orwell says...”

It seemed students preferred to begin the Body, usually the first SP, generally on a wider landscape before moving on to give evidence and explanations. This is again a repetition of Hoey’s (1983) overview type beginning pattern.

6.5.2.1 'Supporting Proposition' move

There were a number of ways by which SP was realised by students in the Body paragraph. Sometimes it would come at the outset of the Body paragraph, or sometimes in the middle of the consecutive Body paragraphs. The following excerpt 41, a continuation of excerpt 33, is an SP that appears as the opening line of the first Body paragraph:

Q. Identify the conflict between Larry and his father and comment on its resolution.

...

[[[In this story, Connor made a humorous use of the twentieth century Austrian psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud's theory of the Oedipus Complex] SP [which stated that every male child at an age of about four or five undergoes through a phase in which he would compete with his own father over his mother's possession and would have his father dearly removed from the mother's life. In normal children, this Oedipal conflict would resolve as the children would reach maturity while in abnormal children, the conflict continued.] ESP-Ex

Excerpt 41 (Appendix 14)

There are also times in the same essay (Appendix 14), as with the other essays (excerpt 42) in the high grade literature data, that SP is presented in the middle or the end of the paragraph. The HGE are able to present different SP that support P and provide evidence of that. The SP is seen to take the form of Hoey's (1983) 'General' stage of the General-Particular pattern.

Q. Discuss how "The Sun Rising" shows a successful fusion of wit and passion.

...

[In the second stanza, the poet attacks the popular notion of the worship-worthy sun by pointing out that he could block out its radiant rays simply by flickering his eyelids. However, the poet knows that he cannot actually obliterate the sun.] ESP- EvEx [Thus he cleverly bends his line of reasoning, and in a marvellous mixture of wit and passion, the poet declares that he will not blink because he does not want to lose sight of his beloved even for a fraction of a second] SP. ...

Excerpt 42

6.5.2.2 'Elaborating Supporting Proposition' move

This is the most important move in the Body paragraphs as it endorses the “validity of the proposition” (Hyland 1990: 72). As seen in the above excerpts 41 and 42, the SP-ESP moves occurred together and often it was not possible to dissociate one from the other. The SP-ESP sequence is recursive and students' essays had a number of rotations of these moves done in different paragraphs. Hoey's (1983) General-Particular or Preview-Detail pattern fits perfectly with the SP-ESP move pair where SP corresponds with Preview or General functions and ESP with Particular or Detail functions. The following, excerpt 43, is also an example of the same pattern:

Q. Discuss Matthew Arnold's poem as criticism of life.

...

[Arnold is excessively a critic of modern life and impressed by the medieval Christendom.]
SP [In 'Dover Beach', the dead world evoked is that of mediaeval Christendom when the sea of faith lay around 'earth's shore' like the folded garment in mediaeval picture. 'Dover Beach' encapsulates the lonely vastness of the world without the traditional refuge of faith, and the failure of religion as an informing principle for modern life or modern world which seems to be a darkling plain where ignorant armies clash by night and this image created by Arnold, is the "most impressive and most pregnant poetic utterance on modern life", according to J.D Jump.] ESP-EvEx

...

Excerpt 43

The ESP move realised by strategies of Evidence (Ev) and Explanation (Ex) were presented by students through different ways. Ev was displayed in form of detailing of events, recount, paraphrase, summary, quotations, historical background, cross referencing so and so forth. Ex can be in form of critical commentary, objective criticism, explanation of the evidence, personalising the issue, discussion of events etc.

A few of the essays presented Explanation of evidence in form of personal engagement and personal insights as evident in Excerpt 44:

Q. Consider 'The Garden Party' as a short story dealing with class discrimination and a society built upon it.

...

[Laura's family keeps servants while Jose loves "giving orders" to them. Thus, the servants just as in real life play the role of order takers so that even later when Laura wishes to carry some left-over food from the party to the poor, dead neighbour's family, death becomes occasion for "good work" and showing sympathy to the poor. This is much like in real life where rich people would not postpone a party just because a poor neighbour has died but then afterwards they would probably show their sympathy and make a visit to the neighbour's family.] ESP-EvEx

Excerpt 44

It was evident from the data that mature writers tended to blend Ev and Ex moves together. They analysed an issue by consciously trying to balance reasoning with emotional involvement and not reproducing a chronological account of events.

6.5.3 Move realisation of literature HGE 'Conclusion'

Most Conclusions were short and show visible signs of students ending the essay in haste.

Stage	M	Move	Strategy	S	Flexibility
Conclusion The sequence of the moves and strategies is also not fixed	RP	Restating Proposition	Consolidation of Ideas and/or	CI	Obligatory
			Confirming Proposition and/or	CP	
			Elaborating Confirmed Proposition	ECP	
	BP	Beyond Proposition	Personal Response and/or	PR	Optional
			Making Suggestions and/or	MS	
			Making Predictions and/or	MP	
			Widening Proposition	WP	

Table 6.11: ‘Conclusion’ stage with moves and strategies of ‘Exposition-Discussion’ model

6.5.3.1 ‘Restating Proposition’ move

Most frequently students would have the RP move which I see as obligatory mainly expressed by CP strategy. Almost always, there would be a marker, a typical language feature signalling the end. For instance, the Conclusions would begin with sentences like:

- “ Thus, in this way...” (see Appendix 14)
- “ Therefore, we see that...”
- “Thus the opening sentence...”
- “The houses thus play...”
- “Thus, when...”
- “ From the above mentioned discussion...”

- “So Eliot handles...”
- “Thus, we cannot...”

All these markers followed on to the RP move which confirm the P or the SP. These markers tried to introduce a cause-consequence relation making the conclusion seem inevitable. A few essays also expanded the RP-CP with a short RP-ECP. Among the other RP strategies, some essays also possessed ‘Consolidation of Ideas’ (CI). Instead of just repeating the P, students also provided an overall summary of what has been discussed in the essay and made a comment on that. Examples of RP-CI and RP-CP done in the same Conclusion is illustrated in the following excerpt:

Q. Discuss Blake's views of innocence & experience while referring closely to 'The Echoing Green' & 'Holy Thursday' from 'Songs of Innocence' and 'The Garden of Love' and 'The Human Abstract' of 'Songs of Experience'.

...

[[[*The Songs of Innocence and Experience* are Blake's revolt against a rigid social order that compels one to become a puppet in the hands of various institutions.] RP-CI [By using contrasting images of the two different worlds, Blake has communicated his stance to a wide audience and convinced many to join his struggle.]]] RP-CP

Excerpt 45

Although all the HGE possessed conclusions, there were four instances when the students did not have separate paragraphs for conclusions and appeared at the end of the Body paragraphs.

6.5.3.2 'Beyond Proposition' move

Unlike the language Exposition-Discussion essays, in the literature Conclusions BP was not a common move. Only 1 essay out of 20 used BP move which used a Personal Response strategy, illustrated in the following excerpt:

Q. Write an essay on the mother-child relationship in "My Oedipus Complex"

...[[[Larry's strong attachment to his mother and his willingness to remove anybody who comes in the way of their relationship is because he is going through the Oedipal phase of his life which most male children do and eventually outgrow.] RP-CP [Larry fails to understand that his mother is only directing her attention to those people who in her opinion need it the most which is why even his father feels neglected after the birth of Sonny.] RP-ECP [However, the mother's love for Larry is undimmed: it is just that she cannot afford to give him as much time as she initially used to when Larry was the only person that her world had consisted of.]]] BP-PR

Excerpt 46

6.6 Move structure and move realisation of English literature low grade essays (LGE) using the 'Exposition-Discussion' based model

In terms of the generic structure, all the essays possessed the Introduction and Body, but it was found that 2 out of 20 essays ended without a Conclusion.

6.6.1 Move realisation of literature LGE 'Introduction'

From the study of twenty low grade literature essays it was revealed that students faced numerous problems with their Introductions.

The Introductions of at least 7 essays did not have a limited boundary. It was sometimes difficult to understand the generic organisation of these essays and draw the line as to where the Introduction ended and the Body started. The Introduction often moved into the second paragraph and merged with the Body paragraph as is illustrated in the essay in the Appendix 15. So the rhetorical functioning of opening the essay and stating the main thesis mingled with other functions of explaining or giving evidence. This was also happening with the language LGE.

6.6.1.1 'Opener' move

Not all essays possessed Openers, which is an optional move. Surprisingly it was found that a few essay Introductions had only O and no P. In some essays the 'O' was there and would reappear after the P and even EP and be in the second paragraph with the P reappearing in the third two sentence paragraph as in the following excerpt 47:

Q. What in your opinion is the theme of the garden party?

Ans.[] ["The Garden Party" by Katherine Mansfield is a wonderful story.] O-GS [It is a story of social distinction, a clear picture of the upper class people and lower class people.] P-ST [The author gives a clear idea between the upper class people and lower class people which is very interesting.] EP

[Theme is not the subject of any work. But rather it is the central idea or dominating idea. It is also implicit subject matter. It indicates indirectly the images, character and main idea.] O-D

[The main theme of "The Garden Party" is Social distinction. The author describes in a very subtle way the theme of this short story.] P-ST

Excerpt 47

Students also had problems beginning the essay in terms of content. They did not know how to present their opening statements, and it was found that students would be putting

in too much of irrelevant information that had little connection with the topic under discussion, as in excerpt 48.

Q. Write on Elizabeth and Jane as you find them in first ten chapters of pride and prejudice.

[[[Pride and prejudice is the most popular novel of Jane Austen. It is her second novel written in 1796-97. The origin name of this novel was "First Impressions". Subsequently, it was revised and renamed. It has a interesting plot with humour and Irony. This novel tells the story of the gradual union of two peoples. One is held back by an unconquerable pride and another is blinded with prejudice.

The portrayal of the characters of this novel are very realistic and convincing. This novel gains value because of its realistic pictures of social and domestic life.] O-BI

[We find many similarities and dissimilarities between Jane and Elizabeth in first ten chapters.]] P-ST [[[Jane is the eldest of Bennet's sisters. She is captivating in her physical appearance, well.....

Excerpt 48

For instance, the student is asked to compare the two sisters in the above question and the student provides irrelevant details about naming of the text and writes about union of the hero and the heroine in the novel instead of focussing on the sisters. Excerpt 48 presents instances of poor structuring as well. O provides irrelevant information in terms of BI and runs till the end of second paragraph and at one point becomes an irrelevant move. It is found that when LGE tried to provide BI they tended to give an excess of background information or content matter that was not relevant.

However, not all LGE gave irrelevant information. The next excerpt shows that the student is trying to give relevant Openers in the Introductory paragraph. But the P is not in this paragraph. It comes at the beginning of the next paragraph. The problem with this

essay lies elsewhere, and not in the Introduction. It will be evident when the other parts are analysed (see section 6.6.2.2).

Q. Discuss Oedipus as a tragic hero.

[[["Oedipus" is a famous tragedy written by Sophocles. In Greek drama 'tragic hero' is an essential part. "Tragic hero" plays an important role in Greek drama.] O-BI [According to Aristotle, tragic hero should be neither perfectly good nor utterly bad He should be neither blameless nor brave. Tragic hero develops the action of the drama. But every tragic hero has a fault. Thus tragic hero performs such by showing this the audience feels pity and fear for his. He represents an action, that it wroth serious attention.] O-D [By this definition, we see that 'Oedipus' is a tragic hero.]]] P-ST...

Excerpt 49

6.6.1.2 'Narrowing towards Proposition' move

The NTP move was sometimes noticed as in the following excerpt. It seemed as though the student was arriving at P but again reverted to providing another irrelevant BI and, thus, is not actually followed by P. Openers are there but they are not appropriately realised because the student uses wrong content.

Q. Write an essay on the character of Bluntschli in "Arms and the Man."

Ans. [[[George Bernard Shaw is a dramatist who used his play as an instrument to criticise the social norms and in consciousness.] O-BI [A writer conveys his ideology or conception through the character.] NTP

[George Bernard Shaw, according to some critics is considered next to Shakespeare. He is fully liable to perform social responsibilities. It should be noted that though he has written a lot of dramas, his all dramas are comedies.] O-BI [In "Arms and the Man" we see Bluntschli as an intentional creation of the play wright.]]] P-ST [[[We first see the presence of Bluntschli in...

Excerpt 50 (Appendix 15)

6.6.1.3 'Proposition' move

It was found among the LGE, that when students directly answered the question or started the essay with P they were more structured than when they set about giving Openers. This is evident when comparing excerpt 50 with excerpt 51.

Q. Write an essay on Bluntschli in *Arms and the man*.

[[In Arms and the man Bluntschli is a practical, romantic, enjoyable character. P-ST George Bernard Shaw built this character for showing a man who is able to do many different things.]] EP

Excerpt 51

Some essays would take a long time to arrive at P. The following excerpt which is the second paragraph of the essay reveals how P appears much later than expected, after a lot of recounting with sporadic commentary.

Q. Discuss how Laura is different from the other members of her family.

...

[[[The writher start her story with the arrangement of *The Garden Party*. At first Laura speak with her mother about *The Garden Party*. Where we notice that Laura's mother is a practical woman. After finishing the conversation Laura go to the garden to see the arrangement of *The Garden Party*. Some journeyman were came to arrange this party. Laura's have no relationship with these people and like these people. She never meet like these people because the family is upper middle class family and for this reason her family far from this people. In this story we see that Laura invented that lower class people are not bad. When Laura speak with these people, all are very friendly and their eyes was harmless. [So Laura was surprised by them.] Ex [Finally Laura got a great experience after meeting these people. But we can say that her other family member are not like Laura.] P-SC ...

Excerpt 52

6.6.1.4 'Elaborating Proposition' move

This move was also present as can be seen from excerpt 51. This move appeared in 5 essays.

6.6.1.5 'Plan of Development' move

There were 4 essays using the PD strategy. However, 2 essays realised it in form of subheadings.

6.6.2 Move realisation of literature LGE 'Body'

The Body posed a real problem in most of the essays. Trying to understand what was happening and identify the moves was perplexing. Again as with the Introduction, similar malfunctioning is seen to occur in the Body too. The Body is expected to provide the development of the argument/claim/thesis stated in the Introduction through a logical progression with relevant substantiation. However, the SP-ESP pair did not work in collaboration, rather in isolation.

Like the HGE body, many of the low grade Body paragraphs also began with linguistic features that signal their transition from Introduction to the main body by referring to the main text they were writing on as the following examples below show:

- "We first see the presence of..." (Appendix 15)
- "In first act we can see..."
- "The play with a ..."
- "In first ten chapters there is..."

- “From the beginning of the essay...”
- “In the play...”
- “At first we see...”
- “The writer start her story...”

However, the development of these markers was done in a completely different way from the HGE as will become evident in the subsequent section.

6.6.2.1 ‘Supporting Proposition’ move

The LGE had major problem with realising the SP move. There was either an overuse of SP or an underuse of it. Right after the Proposition students began to give evidence in form of Recount, simply narrating the story (Excerpt 55). Many of the Body paragraphs did not have a statement to support the claim made in the Introduction. They often began with the evidence right away. 2 essays did not have any SP. And there were cases where there was a series of isolated SP with no elaborations as in excerpt 53, or there were elaborations that went off the topic as in excerpt 54 which is from the same essay:

Q. Write on Elizabeth and Jane as you find them in the first 10 chapters in *Pride and Prejudice*

...

[Elizabeth also very responsible.] SP [She always feel hesitated about her mother.] SP [She inherits the quality of her father.] SP

...

Excerpt 53

...

[Elizabeth has a strong personality.] SP [She does not compromise with her self-belief. She observed everything very critically. She never influenced by anybody. Elizabeth is very conservative. She does not want to express herself. In the ball her sisters even her mother enjoy very much.] ESP-EvEx [In the ball Darcy says about Elizabeth that - "She is tolerable, but not enough handsome to tempt me."] ESP-ExEv

Excerpt 54

6.6.2.2 'Elaborating Supporting Proposition' move

A typical feature of this move in the LGE was the overuse of Recount or detailing of events to elaborate SP or P in the Body of most of LGE. This was revealed in at least 7 essays. The following excerpt is an example, which is a continuation of Excerpt 49 and its Body, with mostly detailing or narrating of events, and is evident of why this essay got a low grade in spite of having a relatively well written Introduction:

Q. Discuss Oedipus is a tragic hero.

... [[[We find an excellent impression Oedipus as a king in the beginning of the drama. The priest, leads the citizens of the city of thebes, says that Oedipus is noble and wise king. He has saved the city from the cruel and blood thirsty sphinx. But, there has been seen a dangerous situation in the city of Thebes. Plauge, a dangerous diseases spreads in the city. Baby cannot born. Everything in the city remains in a serious situation. So, the citizens come to the king for realese from the danger. Before the citizens coming. 'Oedipus' knows the sufferings of the citizens and he has sent Creon to Delphi for that he will take the reason from oracle which is responsable for the danger of the city.] ESP-Ev

[Creon comes and says that there is a evil man in the city, who is the killer of Laius....

Excerpt 55

The above essay has six more paragraphs narrating the complete play with a conclusion which will also be discussed in the next section. The student probably supposed that by telling the story he/she would be providing evidence to the central topic. Another feature

of the LGE body was that students often made fragmented statements, SP, without properly developing or elaborating them as discussed in 6.6.2.1, excerpt 53 which has a three sentence paragraph providing three separate statements about Elizabeth without making it clear what they are intended to support. In addition to that, students sometimes began elaborating the SP but then left it incomplete and digressed to start elaborating on some other SP, as in excerpt 54.

The moves were realised with content information that many teachers would regard as incorrect. For instance, in one essay a student wrote about Jane that “when people admire her she takes it as pride and she is quite vulgar as her mother”. In another question, students were asked to discuss about sonnets with special references to Shakespeare’s sonnets. The student gave comparatively more information on Petrarchan sonnets than Shakespearian.

Where students were required to use highly sophisticated literary terminologies they seemed to use them without being aware of the consensus on their technical meaning. Like, in the excerpt below the comments on the rhyme scheme are factually incorrect.

Q. What is sonnet? Compare and contrast between sonnet 18 and 130.

...

Petrarchan Sonnet: Petrarchan sonnet is more conventional. His sonnets are divisioned into two parts as first eight lines are called octave and the rest six lines are called sestet. His rhyme-scheme etc. is completely different from Shakespearean sonnet. According to his first eight lines rhyme-scheme is ab ba, ab ba and last six lines rhyme scheme is cdc dcd, ef, fe.

...

Excerpt 56

Use of quotations is quite an “effective” way of textual illustration to emphasise one’s interpretations and enhance credibility (Robertson 2000: 87) in literature essays, but in these essays I hardly came across any quotations. Only one student managed a 1-line quote from Shakespeare’s sonnet while 2 in-text quotes were used in two other essays.

Therefore, it can be seen that although students have a Body there were numerous problem areas in terms of how students presented the structure of the essay and what information they provided within that structure.

6.6.3 Move realisation of literature LGE ‘Conclusion’

Like the literature HGE, most of the conclusions were drawn by ‘Restating Proposition’ move, mainly expressed by CP strategy. 6 essays were also found to have markers signalling the end, as in the following:

- “At the end of the play, we can say...” (Appendix 15)
- “So, we can say...”
- “In the ending we can say...”
- “But lastly one night when ...”
- “Finally it’s theme is lovable and...”
- “Finally, we can see that...”

Some of these markers were wrongly used. Students felt that by using ‘lastly’ or ‘finally’ they have concluded the essay, which in fact was not at all concluding anything

and remained inconclusive for the readers. Conclusions were mainly realised by RP-CP move strategy. As mentioned earlier, 2 essays were also found to end with no conclusions drawn. 3 essay Conclusions were followed by a misplaced SP.

6.6.3.1 'Restating Proposition' move

From the study of 20 essays, 15 conclusions were identified as affirming Proposition, with RP move using different strategies, mostly CP. For instance:

Q. Write an essay on the character of Bluntschli in "Arms and the Man."

[[At the end of play we can say George Bernard Shaw has shown his artistic skill by sketching the character of Bluntschli as hero of the play.]] RP-CP

Excerpt 57 (Appendix 15)

One issue identified in the above conclusion and another conclusion in the low grade literature data was that although they confirmed P, they were not consistent with the content of the Body sections. The conclusion of excerpt 57 confirms that the reasons and arguments provided in the Body prove the Proposition, but in reality all the essay did was narrate the whole play and did not provide evidence as to what artistry of Shaw was depicted in drawing Bluntschli's character (excerpt 57).

Similarly, excerpt 58, a continuation of excerpts 49 and 55, has a brief conclusion, RP-CP, at the end. However, what precedes it is of interest because of its ambiguity. The student strongly and repeatedly claims that Oedipus is a tragic hero, but does not provide any arguments to justify that claim, rather continues to only narrate the play.

The student thinks that by just repeating the phrase he/she will be able to convince the reader. It is difficult to see how the SP relates to the elaborations of SP and in turn to the main P.

Q. Discuss Oedipus as a tragic hero.

[All this show that, Oedipus is a tragic hero.] SP [By his character, the audience feels pity and fear for Oedipus's tragedy. As every tragic hero has fault, So Oedipus's faults are to kill father and marry his mother. He plays an action which develops the plot of the play.] ESP-EvEx [As a tragic hero, Oedipus is a confident, wise, man.] SP [His results in his life is a great tragedy. Sophocles shows his greatness in the Oedipus.] ESP-Ex [It's a famous tragedy.] O-GI [Oedipus has the quality of tragic hero. So, he is a tragic hero.] ESP [The fate as well as the fate of Jocasta shows a pathetic scene.] SP [In Greek there is a strong belief of fate. So, it may say that 'Oedipus's fate is the reason for his tragedy.]] ESP-EvEx

[[Finally, we can see that Oedipus is a perfect tragic hero. He plays as an actual tragic hero.]] RP-CP

Excerpt 58

6.6.3.2 'Beyond Proposition' move

This move was detected only in one essay, a move found also only in one literature HGE, done with the obligatory RP move.

6.6.4 Summary of results

Table 6.12 below summarises the main findings between English Literature Exposition-Discussion High Grade and Low Grade Essays in terms of their move occurrences and with some of the strategies to show clearly how differences and similarities appeared among the HGE and LGE.

		Eng. Lit. Exposition- Discussion HGE	Eng. Lit. Exposition- Discussion LGE
Stages	Move & Move order	Total (20)	Total (20)
Introduction	Opener (only)	0	2
	Proposition (without Opener)	3	5
	Opener + Proposition	17	13
	Narrowing Towards Proposition	4	4
	Elaborating Proposition	7	5
	Plan of Development	1	4*
Body	Supporting Proposition	20	19**
	Elaborating*** Supporting Proposition	Evidence (only)	7****
		Explanation (only)	1
		Evidence & Explanation	12*****
Conclusion	Restating Proposition (only)	19	17
	Beyond Proposition (only)		
	Restating Proposition + Beyond Proposition	1	1

Table 6.12: A Comparative summary of the frequency of move realisations in English literature Exposition-Discussion high grade and low grade essays

- * Often done by using subtitles
- ** Often done by a list of isolated SP and no elaboration
- *** Move accompanied by its strategies
- **** Done primarily by narration of plot with occasional comments
- ***** Often there is no match between Evidences and Explanations, and sometimes there is only a comment with no supporting evidence

The significant pattern identified in the following comparative table is in the realisation of the LGE Introductions. 2 essays have Introductions only with O and without the central idea stated, and several of them have PD in form of sub-headings which is not practised in our department with such short essays.

The other significant feature of the LGE that made it different from the HGE was that they possessed several isolated SP with no proper development of the SP and often the ESP was done in form chronological narration of the story.

6.7 Discussion

It is generally perceived that sentence level accuracy of language of any text is a mark of good writing. Although I agree that it is important, one of the goals of my research is to go beyond this common sense view and try and find differences between HGE and LGE that are not obvious to everybody. Hence, my study focuses on structural organisation and content input for realising the appropriate structure.

6.7.1 High and low grade ‘Description-Recount’ language essays

The essays will be discussed on the basis of their structure and content.

6.7.1.1 Structure

The analysis showed that the high and low grade ‘Description-Recount’ essays did not differ much in their generic and move structures. All possessed the three parts: Introduction, Body, Conclusion. Hence, the weaknesses in the essays did not depend on macro structure but more on areas of grammar, lack of language proficiency and how the moves were realised. Since my study does not focus on the two former areas, although I acknowledge they are important, I did not consider them in my discussion.

Most of the high and low grade essays follow Hoey's General-Specific pattern in the Introductions. However, 9 out of 15 HGE had P directly to begin with while 4 of LGE opened with P directly. One LGE also had only O and no P. The body paragraphs consisted of the series of events or descriptions in both HGE and LGE with occasional personal opinions. All essays had Conclusions expressing very strong personal views about the issue written about.

6.7.1.2 Content

The personal responses in every stage of the essays are vital components of the 'Description-Recount' essays that keep the personal mode of the essays alive.

In the Introductions, when students had Openers in HGE they were found to be realised with the right amount of content whereas in the LGE there seemed to be an imbalance with too much of emphasis on O and little emphasis on P. In the body of the 'Description-Recount' HGE the series of events or descriptions are expressed coherently whereas in the LGE they are seen to be a list of disconnected points not properly developed. The Conclusions of the HGE have a sense of rounding up the whole piece of text while with the LGE the conclusions were either very abrupt or were pieces of new information that would have been better if placed in the Body.

6.7.2 High and low grade 'Exposition-Discussion' language essays

This section will also be discussed from the perspective of structure and content of the high and low grade 'Exposition-Discussion' language essays.

6.7.2.1 Structure

Again structurally, the LGE also possessed similar moves as the HGE. The problems occurred mainly during ordering and realisation of the moves which will be discussed in the next section.

Students had more variations in constructing their Introductions because of the subjective choices. Many essay Introductions were not confined to a single paragraph in both LGE and HGE of Exposition-Discussion. Most of the essays, more or less, were found to have Opener moves going down to Proposition, so the pattern in most cases would be from General to Specific. However, it was evident that with these essays students faced more difficulties with structuring than the Description-Recount essays because often there were instances of the boomerang type General-Specific-General pattern, which was certainly found more in the LGE essays. Some LGE Introductions did not even have P. Sometimes P would be found just before the Conclusions.

All the high grade 'Exposition-Discussion' essays had proper development of P. SP, or Stating the Proposition was a move that was done properly in the HGE and is reiterated in most Body paragraphs as a topic sentence, occurring sometimes at the beginning, middle or the end, whereas in the LGE the SP is realised by simply repeating the topic

of the essay. All the high grade 'Exposition-Discussion' language essays showed features of SP move developing into ESP realised by its pair of EvEx strategy. The Elaborations of SP is where the LGE really differ from the HGE because the information and arguments provided by the students are not appropriate. In most of the LGE, it was painfully difficult to find proper SP-ESP move pair. Often there would be some commentaries that had no SP and was not accompanied with any evidence, or there would be detailing of events in form of evidence with no explanation or SP.

All essays had Conclusions that confirmed P and they certainly possessed a personalised point of view. The most striking feature was in the similarities in the conclusions of HGE and LGE. Even LGE had proper conclusions. In both, students were very consciously taking a position in the conclusions and making suggestions of what can be done or make predictions of what will happen if measures are not taken.

It was found that the end of Introduction and beginning of Body merged in the same paragraph. What they lacked was the rhetorical structuring and lack of proper linkage between the moves, due to which the ideas did not flow well between them.

6.7.2.2 Content

The right content in the right position with indepth analysis was a major difference between the high and low grade 'Exposition-Discussion' language essays. I would not say that the language HGE were all very good in terms of their language. They also had grammatical errors but their explanations and discussions of the arguments and evidence

were communicated logically and explored in detail. The essays, thus, had a flow which the LGE did not. HGE were also able to personalise experiences with the given issue of the topics.

Although both high and low grade 'Exposition-Discussion' language essays mainly use multiple Openers to introduce their essays, the high ones have relevant background information and the low ones use isolated sentences with bits of disconnected information that do not produce coherent meaningful ideas. In the LGE students simply repeat the topic thinking they have made the Proposition. In the HGE, the Body moves are realised with indepth analysis of claims or statements substantiated by evidence that are logically argued or explained. There were a few essays with language problems but even these essays tried very hard to have a logical progression between SP-ESP substantiated by evidence and explanations and giving their own critical views on the issue or arguments. The lack of analytical depth and incomplete explanations of evidence or mention of series of evidence without proper explanations and connections is what characterises the LGE. The Conclusions were realised in both HGE and LGE mostly with the optional Beyond Proposition move using the Personal Response, Making Suggestions, Making Predictions strategies. The Restating Proposition move was found only in a few essays. Even the LGE did not have a straightforward RP move, and if they at all did it was done with a combination of BP move.

6.7.3 High and low grade 'Exposition-Discussion' literature essays

6.7.3.1 Structure

In terms of generic structuring, HGE possessed all the three parts while the LGE in some cases ended without conclusions. However, even in a few high grade literature essays, it was difficult to demarcate the boundaries of Introduction from the Body and the Body from the Conclusions because one section got merged with the other. This problem was more prominent in the LGE.

Both HGE and LGE had openers where the former in most cases had appropriate ones relevant to the text or issue to be discussed, the latter had information that had little or no relevance to the main issue. NTP was a rarely occurring move in both high and low grade essays. It was visible that although students could begin an essay with a focused P and move on to develop the idea further the more mature writers (assuming from their grades), felt that they needed to begin the essay with O or a sort of background before they could zoom on to the main topic, that is, use the General-Specific pattern. Low grade literature essays, on the other hand, do not have an organised General specific move structure. They are often seen to move from Opener to Proposition and then back to Opener.

Even some good essays were found to begin their P in a new paragraph. This was, however, more common in LGE. A strong possibility for doing this could be that

students feel that they should begin the Proposition or main issue to be discussed in a new paragraph. Hence, students are at times unable to segregate the three part structural division systematically. Once P was made students elaborated P and this was found in HGE more than LGE. Most likely students felt there was a need to develop the thesis statement a little further which would act as a link with the Body of the essay. Like NTP, Plan of Development, PD, move was also a rare move in both HGE and LGE.

Interestingly, both high and low grade literature essays began their Body paragraphs in a similar fashion with exophoric references as transition frame markers (6.5.2 and 6.6.2). However, HGE use these frame markers or topic shifts (Hyland 2001, 2004c 2005) appropriately and go on to develop the SP-ESP move pair, whereas the LGE use them and go on to give a chronological narration of the plot. This has been indicated by the teachers as well (8.2.2.3.2.ii).

The SP-ESP moves caused major problems in LGE, most specifically literature ones, as it was found that there were multiple isolated SP following each other without proper elaborations or ESP. It seemed that these students presumed if they displayed piles of new information they could impress the examiner better. When the SP-ESP pair is found together it often happens that they did not match the move pair sequence. The ESP was not supporting the SP that preceded, it was rather a continuation of some other SP. So, evidence of going off the topic is very common in LGE. As a result, most of the time the move pair proved dysfunctional, resulting in texts that were incoherent and replete

with “patchwork”, as was described by Hull and Rose’s (1989) study of underprepared students’ approach to writing of summaries.

On the other hand, HGE had appropriate SP, functioning as the topic sentences that would at times come at the outset of the Body paragraph, sometimes in the middle of the consecutive Body paragraphs and at other times in the end. Students with LGE often do not understand the need to signal the reader of the thesis in the topic sentence and therefore less SP is found in them.

Conclusions of literature HGE were done quite briefly by the obligatory retrospective RP move mainly expressed by CP strategy and in most cases there was a marker to signal the end. Similarly, LGE also concluded with RP-CP if conclusions were provided. Some LGE would have a linguistic marker signalling the end. The writers probably felt that the conclusion was drawn which in reality remained inconclusive. Some conclusions were seen to also have a sudden return of unexplained SP after the conclusion. The BP moves were rare in both high and low grade literature essays.

6.7.3.2 Content

The HGE would have variety of Openers, like using gambits or quotations, to grab the attention and interest of the reader whereas the LGE would most often open with a general statement or background context. HGE also gave background information that was relevant, that is, were on the texts in question, and of proportionate quantity. On the other hand, when LGE realised the Openers with background information, they ignored

the text or issue and described the author's details and tended to give an excess of background information or information that was not relevant enough (Student and teacher perspectives on this in 8.2.2.3.1.iii and 7.2.2.4.1.iii).

Many of the LGE started with the Proposition right away, which I felt was a better strategy for weaker writers to use, answering the question at the beginning as Cowley (2002) suggests, because when they were using the openers they were expressing them in all the wrong possible ways. Some LGE Introductions had openers only and no proposition, which would be found in the Body. This was, however, something that even some of HGE seemed to do, but in fewer occasions. It could be possible that students most probably feel that they should end their Introduction with O and begins the Body with the main idea, P. Some high grade students deliberately chose not to reveal the P at the beginning.

The issue of the presence of transition frame markers in the Body raised in 6.7.3.1 has another explanation in terms of content. Students might feel it is a necessary step to convince the reader that he/she has read the whole text and is able to make connections with the text and the issues/arguments of the essay. The SP-ESP sequence is recursive mainly following General-Particular pattern and students' essays seemed to have a number of rotations of these moves done in different paragraphs. The HGE SP provided the topic sentence and ESP was realised by evidence from the text through different means. In the LGE SP was realised by a repetition of the topic and ESP was realised mainly by recounting or summarisation of whole text. The recounting of events is

thought to be evidence for low grade students. Hence, often it is found that ESP are there but with the absence of SP. Most of the HGE had analytical depth to their essays, an essential feature in literature essays. There were a few essays with language problems but even these essays tried very hard to have a logical progression between SP-ESP substantiated by evidence and explanation and giving their own critical views on the issue or arguments. Very few instances of unnecessary summarising of events occurred in HGE. In contrast, the LGE seemed less interested in signalling the reader with the main focus, SP, and more into trying to regurgitate summaries of plots thoughtlessly. The ESP was mainly realised through recounts or paraphrase of detail of events and were often found to have incorrect information and misinterpretation of the text.

Although, the HGE also did not have advanced ways of presenting their conclusions, they all possessed conclusions and they were realised by a restatement of their proposition, which was also the case with the LGE if they at all had conclusions. With LGE students might feel that once they have given their supporting evidence and explanation, they have answered the question and the need for conclusions was not a necessary factor.

6.8 Discussion of the relationship between language and literature essays

The relationship will be discussed on the basis of similarities and dissimilarities between the essays.

6.8.1 Similarities between English language and literature essays

Both language and literature essays had 'Exposition-Discussion' type essays which could be analysed using the 'Exposition-Discussion' based model. Hence, there are structural similarities. Generically, like most students' essays, they can be divided into the three-part structure. The moves within these three parts are also similar to each other. The Introduction usually opens with Opener/s, then move towards the Proposition which is realised by stating the central claim or issue or thesis which is sometimes elaborated before ending the Introductory paragraph. The Body begins by signalling to the reader with a statement supporting the proposition and develops it by substantiation in form of exemplums, explanations and justifications appearing in a number of paragraphs in recursive nature. This is finally followed by a concluding paragraph with all the ideas discussed throughout the essay in a condensed form along with a personalised comment if necessary.

Tertiary level essays mainly involve argumentation, exposition and analysis. If students can write good argumentative essays for their language class they can definitely do so for their literature classes too. Knowing the structure and organisation of a language essay can enable the students to use the same pattern to construct the literature essays provided they have the content knowledge of what to put where.

6.8.2 Dissimilarities between English language and literature essays

The language essays belonged to the 'Description-Recount' type alongside 'Exposition-Discussion' type, whereas the literature essays were all 'Exposition-Discussion'. The

'Description-Recount' essays are very different from 'Exposition-Discussion' essays. The structure is different as has been depicted earlier (6.1, 6.3 and 6.5 and section 5.5 Tables 5.5 and 5.6) and as a result of which the need for two analytical models arose. The Body of the 'Description-Recount' essays differ mostly from the 'Exposition-Discussion' essays. In the former, the Body comprises a series of events or series of descriptions, simply concentrating on telling or narrating or informing or describing the reader about an issue with first hand experience that may or may not be chronological. These descriptions or retellings are often accompanied by personal views. They do not require students to have complex moves like restating the thesis statement, elaborating it, trying to prove a point and also having to maintain the logical SP-ESP pair relationship. The 'Description-Recount' essays differ from the discussion essays of both language and literature. Furthermore, the language discussion essays are also different from literature discussion essays.

These differences mainly lay in the way the content matter and the use of discipline specific specialist language is handled. Language essays are written from students' background knowledge, whereas the literature essays depend on students' reading of particular texts and processing the ideas, understanding that, synthesising other resources to support it or cross refer it and then writing on it according to the given topic. Students feel more at ease with the language topics and can identify themselves easily within the given topic and make judgemental comments. One way in which this is shown in the text is in the use of 'I', 'we' and 'us'. The most common interpretation of the pronoun 'we' is that it refers to the notion of belonging to a group. In Hyland's

(2001, 2004c, 2005) term 'we' refers to a metadiscoursal feature of 'self-mention'. This is commonly found in the language essays where the construction and presentation of knowledge is subjective. Another reason for the language essays, either Description-Recount or Exposition-Reason, being of that kind is because the question prompts are of a very interactive nature (like 'Do you agree?') where it asks the writer for a personal view and that is what we find, as in excerpt 24 of this chapter. These 'we' also extend to refer to group of students in some cases, or it might refer to people in Bangladesh or a social and religious group the students belong to etc. In contrast, in literature essays these pronouns rarely appear. Even if they do, they do not have "explicit author reference" or "author identity" (Hyland 2005: 53) and are simply synonyms of 'one' or 'people'. These latter 'we' are just not necessary, as in excerpt 36.

Another way in which a stark contrast between the literature and language essay is shown is in the way students handle conclusions. In the literature essays even the good students hardly take a position very strongly and finish off their essays with merely a restatement of what they stated before, but in the language essays there is a deliberate drive to put forth their personal choices and make suggestions.

So in terms of structure and organisation students can handle the language essays better than the literature essays. Even the weaker students are aware of the basic strategies needed to function in the three-part essay structure. Although the analytical framework shows that structurally the language and literature essays have similar moves with a number of optional tactical choices, there is either an apparent lack of transferability of

the skills or a wrong transfer of the text structure from one genre to another due to a lack of the understanding of the workings of the genre structure. It is surprising to see how these same students who can structure language essays cannot do so with literature essays. This suggests that students could not transfer the writing skills they acquired from the language class instructions into their literature essays.

The genre analysis, thus, identified the fact that literature essays depended more on analysis and argumentation and if students tended to recount or summarise the text marks got lowered and this was mainly because of the nature of the task. This was necessarily not so in case of language essays because their tasks often required them to recount and describe events.

6.9 Conclusion

This chapter provided a detailed description of how students structured the HGE and LGE in the English language and literature essays using the two models. The chapter ends with a discussion of what the different types of essays do in terms of structure and content followed by a discussion of the relationship between English language and literature essays. Textual information was drawn from this chapter. The study now moves on to seek contextual information in Chapters 7 and 8.

CHAPTER 7: ANALYSING STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF ESSAYS

7.0 Introduction

In Chapters 2 (2.8.2) and 3, I discussed how this study attempts to shed light on practices and perceptions of students and teachers in addition to text analysis in order to get multiple insights into the essays written by students. This chapter presents the data I gathered from students (the next chapter does the same with teachers), their responses about the different aspects of writing experiences, particularly their attitudes towards their writing of English essays, which is presented in three main sections: 1. Methodology, 2. Findings and, 3. Discussion.

Since the data from students were gathered from dual sources, pre-interview questionnaire and interviews, each has separate Methodology and Findings sections. The pre-interview questionnaire (PIQ) findings are presented separately from the interviews as the former was intended to act as a protocol prior to the interviews that I was to conduct with the students. Hence, Section 7.1 discusses the methodology and findings of the Pre-interview Questionnaire, section 7.2 does the same for Student Interviews and section 7.3 provides a single discussion section. These data were intended to answer Research Questions 3, and 4 which were corroborated with the findings of RQ 1 (Chapter 4) and 2 (Chapter 6).

According to Coffey and Atkinson (1996) the task of data analysis includes different procedures before reaching the stage of interpretation. Likewise, Dey (1993) also reports that data analysis is carried out through three linked processes. They are 'describing', 'classifying' and 'connecting'. The first two stages, describing and classifying, are the stages where one compresses and assembles the data into categories and themes, whereas the final stage, connecting, is where one interprets the data and identifies meaning out of the patterns emerging.

7.1 Pre-interview questionnaire

After collection of the students' essays and having done some initial essay analysis, I decided to conduct interviews with students to gain insight into their perceptions. Instead of doing the main interviews straight away or conducting Pilot interviews, I conducted a pre-interview questionnaire on a larger sample of students with open ended questions to get a more generalised picture and check which questions would be more applicable for my study in the interviews with my students. The richness of the responses led me to decide to include them as a part of the main data. Hence, the pre-interview questionnaire was both a protocol to my students' interview and a source of data to corroborate with my other sources of data.

7.1.1 Pre-interview questionnaire design and methodology

The pre-interview questionnaire was done with 99 First year students. The structured questionnaire comprising 17 open ended questions (Appendix 16) required students to give brief responses that revealed diverse ideas lurking in the minds of the students

about their writing experiences. While designing the questionnaire I had my research questions in mind in addition to the knowledge I carried with me from my initial text analysis. Since the students were not used to answering such questionnaires before I felt that the questions had to be as clear as possible. I also wanted to approach the issues through different angles, and therefore, I broke down each issue into several related questions.

The questions were primarily connected with the following six major topic headings --- (1) Importance of Writing (2) Differences between pre-university writing and university writing in the English Department, (3) Similarities and dissimilarities between English language essays and English literature essays written in the First year, (4) Use of instructional verbs and question wordings of the essay questions or topics, (5) Major problems faced while writing English language and literature essays and, (6) Impact of English language classes on essay writing.

The first topic was generally important in order to confirm that students also viewed, like me, writing as an important skill to master for their university study. The second topic was not one of my research aims, yet it was crucial to know what students had been writing in their previous years (SSC/HSC) before looking at what they were writing for their English language and English literature classes and get a better understanding of why things were happening as they were. The third topic was directly one of my research aims and the second topic helped me understand the third more vividly. The fourth topic was also one of the research aims. It was important to see

whether students paid attention to the words used in the questions and topics before they embarked on answering the questions. From the teacher pilot interview (8.1), which was conducted at CAL (CELTE) before I went to Dhaka to do the questionnaire survey and main interviews, the issue of students' writing problems came up quite vividly, and therefore, the choice of the fifth topic. Finally, the last topic was necessary to find out what was happening within the pedagogic arena and what students felt were necessary.

7.1.2 Pre-interview questionnaire data analysis and findings

The pre-interview questionnaire was done through content analysis of the responses (Gillham 2000). The responses were carefully read, then similar responses in form of quotations were grouped together under one topic. In the final phase these were paraphrased and described. Only the most relevant quotations were cited.

The major observations grouped under the six selected topics are given below:

7.1.2.1 Importance of writing skills

A considerable number of students, 29, mentioned writing was important for them because they were able to know their structural errors from the checked scripts, such as, errors in spelling, grammar, sentence structure, tense. Another 13 students mentioned that writing created ample opportunities for students to become reflective and creative and helped develop thinking and imaginative power. It was also revealed from the responses of 11 students that they found writing to be an effective way to memorise answers to questions.

Another observation by 6 students was that writing was important because the written texts remain as permanent records. 5 students specifically commented that teachers assess students academically through their written tests and the grades/marks they get in the exams.

7.1.2.2 Difference between pre-university and university writing

It was revealed that pre-university writing was perceived by all the students as being very different from university writing. The differentiating points were based on the writing tasks, the subject matter, the writing method used and the writing rules provided by teachers. They expressed that school and college level writing tasks were easy as students were required to mainly write brief answers to comprehension passages or do fill in the gap type of exercises. The few compositions that students had to write at pre-university level were descriptive. The topics were often predictable and could be prepared and inevitably memorised. An interesting comment was:

we memorise some study materials like a parrot without knowing its inner meaning and appeal but now we are to feel the inner meaning and express it in very own style and manner
--

Moreover, all these First year students start writing about literary texts for the first time at the university, for which they are required to write on their own after understanding the main text, explain literary terms and also analyse other people's writing while answering a question.

Students commented that when they went to university they became aware of the concept of rules for writing such as writing coherently, having a thesis statement, topic sentences and so on. Among the respondents, 88 observed that they were ignorant about topic sentences, supporting details and concluding sentence during their SSC/HSC. These rules or instructions which they became aware of now at the university gave them insight into how they could write with clarity and conciseness.

7.1.2.3 Difference between English language and literature essays

When answering questions on this topic, students mentioned that the differences were characterised by the level of difficulty, use of subject matter, use of imagination and thinking and writing styles. It was revealed that students found literature essay writing to be a more complex process, because they had neither read literature before nor written essays on literary texts in their previous academic life. One of the respondents even identified his/her familiarity with the present English language writing tasks but reported on how he/she found difficulty in writing the literature essays:

we were accustomed to writing language essays in our SSC/HSC studies, but now writing literature essays we are encountering so many problems like accumulating different ideas into a platform and giving them a reasonable shape, commenting on something with our own words etc.
--

Most students felt that language essays could be written even without preparation in simple English with an emphasis placed on use of vocabulary and grammatical accuracy. Since the subject matter is related with the personal experiences or daily activities of the students, it can easily be written.

Four students claimed that language essays were confined within grammatical rules whereas the literature essays were free from all rules and one could express one's own point of view. However, another student stated that he/she was always worried about the acceptability of his/her opinion in literature essays, but with language essays he/she was always able to write on whatever topic that came.

Another issue that a few students raised in these responses was the difficulty in understanding the literary texts. These students found the denotative meaning but were unable to grasp the connotative meaning, and this hampered their flow of writing. The use of literary devices, the historical details of the texts, the writers' background, biography and so on, most students mentioned, were the numerous factors that contributed to the formidable process of literature essay writing.

A metaphoric illustration from one student of the difficult process can be understood from the following comment:

writing for literature is as difficult as lifting a 100 pound stone from one place to another. The language seems to be very obscure and difficult to scan the main idea
--

7.1.2.4 Use of instructional verbs in topics /questions of the essays

One of the important issues of this study is to focus on the use of instructional verbs and question wordings, to see what type of questions students were required to answer and whether the students were at all doing what they were expected to do. In this respect, 61

opined that they gave attention to instructional verbs in the questions and 13 replied negatively. I was interested about the 61 positive responses. From text and topic analyses I had different apprehensions and prepared myself to probe further the issue of understanding the instructional verbs once I interviewed the students (7.2.2.3.i). Among the negative responses were comments like "we don't give emphasis because we are not acquainted about the matter", "we cannot understand question meaning so do not know how to prepare answer in the exam" and "in writing literature and language essays we face problems of understanding the question". The positive responses did not tend to capture the whole picture, they were simply like, "Yes, we do" and this combined with my knowledge of the context made me want to probe further.

7.1.2.5 Problems of students' writing

Student responses identified several major problems, which were, expressing ideas clearly for literature essays (almost everyone; 7.1.2.3), lack of vocabulary (41), grammatical accuracy (38), lack of knowledge of organisation and structure in an essay (25) and teaching methodology (16). Among the numerous grammatical mistakes students identified the following as the most frequently occurring ones: S-V agreement, making compound and complex sentences, tense, sentence structure/ construction/ building. The other mechanics of writing they reported problems with were spelling, vocabulary, punctuation, handwriting. Generally, they faced grammatical problems and were not sure whether they were writing with accuracy.

Students felt that they had a lot to say but could not express their ideas in English as they did not write regularly and did not possess the appropriate stock of words. Even if they knew the words they were unable to use them properly as they could not remember the right words at the appropriate time. With regards to structure and organisation students expressed diversified problems. They felt that they could arrange neither their sentences nor their thoughts properly and logically. They could not gather the right language for a good introduction or conclusion to an essay.

At present teachers in the English language class of the First year provide instructions as to how essays should be written, however, many students also felt that these instructions were insufficient. Moreover, literature teachers did not provide any guidelines for literature essay writing. In the context of examinations, time pressure was another problem with students. The few students who did mention this problem opined that they could not complete their essay in time and also were unable to organise their points during the examination because they did not get enough time and wrote whatever came to their mind randomly.

7.1.2.6 Impact of English language classes on English essay writing

76 students wrote that they learnt a lot about writing from the English language classes. They learnt about technique of writing essays, how to outline, how to start and finish and also mentioned that teachers provided instructions for writing language essays. In these classes there is more chance of writing on topics that revolve round their lives.

Against the 76 students, 21 said that they did not learn anything from the English language classes.

7.2 Student interviews

The interactions with students allowed me to find out certain issues that lurked in my mind partly from the ideas gained from the analysis of the language and literature and also clarify some points raised in the questionnaire responses. I needed to discuss further why students were writing their essays the way they were.

7.2.1 Student interview design and methodology

Ten students were interviewed on the same topics that were used in the questionnaire. The students were selected across different levels to get a wider range of views. Six First year students spoke about their current experiences in contrast to the senior students (two Second year and two Third year) who reported their present views about their First year experiences of writing essays.

In this thesis, I identify my student participants, like the teachers, by numbers (S1/2 etc) for maintaining anonymity. At times where I use direct quotations, I provide numbered lines from interview transcripts with student participant number in parenthesis. When I report from follow up interview notes, I add 'fu' with the student identification. Line numbers were only added to 'fu' where interviews were taped and transcribed. This same procedure was followed for all the interviews with both students and teachers.

The First year students (S2, S3, S4, S5, S9, S10) had all completed the pre-interview questionnaires which were referred to during the main interviews. All the main interviews were audio taped and transcribed. Two interviewees, S7 and S8, were not followed up. Only one follow up interview was taped and transcribed. Students had the option of using L1 or L2, however, most of them spoke in English. The parts where they used L1 were translated and italicised while transcribing. The interviews ran for 35-60 minutes each. Most of the follow ups were carried out at different stages of the research by informal conversations which were not taped. They were mainly conducted by keeping notes.

Students' Profile (S1-S10)

S1 was in her Second year, but when I first contacted her in my First year of the PhD programme, in January 2006, to collect essays she was doing her First year classes. With her I was able to conduct three follow up interviews. By the time I went to do my main data collection she had just finished her First year finals and I interviewed her at this point. S1 studied in one of the best schools of Dhaka (capital of Bangladesh) and had received A+ grades (80% plus) in her English subject in both her SSC (Secondary) and HSC (Higher Secondary) Final board exams.

S2 was in her First year. She volunteered to participate and handed me all her marked written essays. Like S1, S2 also did very well in her board exams and attained A+ in both the SSC and HSC. Her schooling was suburban (small town) based.

S3 was also in his First year. He came from a remote village school and achieved A-grade (60%- 70%) in English in HSC and B grade (50%) in SSC. He was one of the weaker students I interviewed in terms of English language proficiency. Nevertheless, he had very interesting information to disseminate.

S4 was in her First year and had attained A in English in HSC and A+ in SSC.

S5 was in her First year too. She came from a suburban area and she also had outstanding results getting A+ grades in her English for both the board exams. She enjoyed reading literature.

S6 was in her Third year. She had a very good grasp of the English language and was the only student among all the participants who studied the same national board curriculum as the others but in the English 'version'. She did not enjoy writing within structure bindings and liked to experiment different styles into her writing.

S7 was in her Second year and had A+ in English in both SSC and HSC.

S8 was in the Third year and had read some English literature for his English paper as he followed the old syllabus. He was also a good student. He enjoyed reading literature and preferred creative writing to writing academic essays.

S9 was in his First year, a very hardworking self made student from a remote village who did not even have formal schooling till class seven. He secured A grade in English in HSC and B in his SSC.

S10 was in his First year too. He had great passion for English literature. Although he did not study English literature as a school subject, he read it on his own. He attained A in English in both his HSC and SSC examinations.

7.2.2 Student interview data analysis and findings

Richards' (2003), Rubin and Rubin's (2005) and Dornyei's (2007) studies on interview analysis/coding and categorisation helped me carry out my interview analyses. Modifications to the analytical methods were made to suit my analysis as will be discussed below.

My position as an insider into the community, my earlier analysis of the students' essays and questionnaires meant that I did have some preconceived notions of what sort of questions to ask, but I did not know what people were exactly going to respond to these. In my analysis, I have tried both to analyse data in terms of the pre-existing categories and also I have looked at the new information that came in and made a different set of decisions on how to categorise that. The preconceived notions led the interviews being quite controlled following a more or less top-down procedure. However, the interviews also left avenues open for new information to come in.

All the interviews were transcribed using a three column based template recommended by Richards (2003: 23-24), with the last column left for hand written comments/notes/labels which were later typed in the final phase.

I started by reading the transcripts line by line to label the data units with broad topics that I had in my mind (like, Structure of essay, Views about literature essays, Problems of students' writing etc.) and some categories that arose out of the data (like, Role of Memorisation, Suggestions for Improvement etc.).

On second reading of the same interview I looked in more detail at what the interviewees actually meant when they responded on the broad topics. For instance, the piece of data that I labelled 'Structure of Essay' (7.2.2.4) I observed was actually imparting information about how 'Structure is important for both language literature essays' (7.2.2.4.i). See Appendix 20 and 21 for sample extracts with categorisation.

After each interview was labelled once, it was kept aside for at least two weeks and then labelled again on a fresh transcript. This was done at least three times with each interview. The major categories identified in the interviews were assigned a particular colour to codify them on the hard copies (for instance, opinions on literature essays = green, language essays = yellow, topics = pink, students problem issues = blue, structure= orange, past experience= purple, suggestions =brown) (Dorneyei 2007).

The same process was conducted with all the interviews (both students and teachers). Comparison of all labels across all the interviews was made to identify not only repeating ideas but also the variations and the different shades of meanings that existed among them.

The final phase and most difficult phase of analysis reached when I had to pull together and summarise by “weighing and combining” (Rubin and Rubin 2005: 227) the separate explanations from different interviewees on a similar idea into a single descriptive narrative, instead of presenting them case by case.

Therefore, I not only present summarised versions of what the majority of the interviewees said but also highlight some minority responses which I felt were essential in understanding the pluralistic nature of reality.

The category development process was, thus, conducted through ‘semi-inductive’ means. The main categories were derived from the purpose of the study and the research aims, hence, preconceived, whereas the sub-categories were drawn from content analysis of the interview responses.

The development of sub-categories consisted of two stages. During the first stage, I mainly looked for answers to my questions and then I revisited the data several times to see anything new emerging out of the data. As a result, I gained my information in the form of responses or answers for the subcategories in three distinct ways:

1. Responses that directly answered my questions
2. Answers to my questions that surprised me (7.2.2.1.v) and
3. New topics that were brought up by the interviewees and emerged through bottom up means (like 7.2.2.1.iv)

I have illustrated the subcategories with excerpts of responses from the interviews directly. At times the interview data were cross referred with Pre-Interview Questionnaire (PIQ) data in this chapter. Sample extracts from S1 interview with initial labellings and final categorisation are presented in Appendix 20 and 21. The major categories identified from the student interviews were:

7.2.2.1 Different writing experiences in different contexts

Among the following sub-categories were responses that answered my questions (i, ii, iii), some responses that emerged as new topics (iv), and some that surprised me (v).

(i) Lack of instruction

Students reported that the writing tasks done in the past (S1 ll.109-110, 122-123, 143-145, S4 ll.85-92, 121-126, S7 ll.214-241, S9 ll.169-174, S10 ll.121-127) and that the teaching of writing in the past (S1 ll.24-42, 282-285, S2 ll.400-403, S3 ll.721-764, S5 ll.475-503, S6 ll.16-24, 39-45, 59-61, S7 ll.24-27, 56-74, 109-113, S8 ll.179-206, 317-329, S10 ll.886-926) were both inadequate and that they mainly became aware of the writing technicalities in the language classes at the university. They also noted that they were not given adequate instructions at the university as well, especially for the writing

of English literature essays, as was revealed in PIQ (7.1.2.3 and 7.1.2.5). All the interviewees observed that they were never taught practically how to write a paragraph or essay at school and college. Only one student, S1fu1 (ll. 73-80), out of the ten reported that she had the theoretical knowledge that an essay should first begin with the main idea then the body and then the concluding sentence or paragraph but added that she actually did not know how to practically construct them. S1fu2 informed that in the past it was through the mark she was able to know whether she was writing well or not. S1 (ll. 282-290) acknowledged that it was from her Language class at the university that she learnt to write essays in an “improved” style (Appendix 20 and 21).

Apart from her, the other nine students unanimously agreed that it was at the university in the First year that they for the first time became aware of the writing rules, structure of an essay, ways to give evidences and explanations and the different types of writing. They also felt that the Language course was very helpful in imparting those skills.

Students (S10 ll.369-370, S2 ll.47-48, S6) were still not sure as to how a literature essay should be written because in the tutorial classes they were not given any instructions by the tutor. S6, who is one of the brightest students, felt that at the university teachers took things for granted and did not try to understand the background of the students. She added that teachers should consider the past educational settings of the students before expecting advanced level essays (ll.349-358). She also observed that, in the tutorial classes if teachers gave timely feedback and pointed out students’ mistakes then students’ performance could improve (ll.333-337).

(ii) The role of creativity

Students (S1, S2, S5, S6, S9) felt that creativity was an important quality of a writer. S6 revealed, in the past her teachers would expect very “straightforward” (l.42) answers, they would not encourage students to see an issue from “various perspectives or critically” (ll.40-41). Teachers would literally tell students to “photo copy” (l.1241) on the exam scripts what they had learnt from the books and would penalise if students wrote on their own, responded S6.

... creativity wasn't very encouraged... teachers were used to looking at a certain set type of answers... whenever I tried to write my own type of answers I got very low marks... that's why I never wanted to get admitted in English when I came to university. Because I thought that, ...the same thing would happen here. (S6 ll. 45-64)

Adding to that, S6 mentioned that, on the contrary, teachers at the university looked for answers “completely different” (l.69) from others and encouraged “personal opinion” (l.72), something students found very formidable because they were not used to this before. These two teaching attitudes were so “completely opposite” (l.1255) each other that students found it very difficult to adjust (S6 ll.1236-1257). Often in the First year she would be wary and “confused” (l.123) of giving her opinion, thinking the teacher might not agree with the way she “viewed something” (l.111) and not give her marks, because in the past students were not expected to “contradict what the teacher said” (ll.127) and were expected to memorise. This damaged their creativity (S9 ll.213-217).

A point raised by S1 was that the type of tasks she did for her English classes in the past, that is, comprehension work, short answers, summaries of passages, dialogues, paragraphs and essays, helped her write for the language class but not for her literature classes (S1 ll.109-114). What helped her write for literature classes was her imaginative power which not all students possessed (S1 ll.164-165, Appendix 20 and 21). Writing using one's own ideas and creative writing was never encouraged at school which S2 regrets (ll.312-315). Concerning what she did while writing, since no one instructed her on how to write, she informed:

What I mainly did was I consulted 1-2 books, wrote from there and then may be suddenly I would write a couple of lines on my own in between, but that was very little. (S2ll. 338-341 translated)

(iii) The role of the language class

Although students felt that there was more that could be done in the language classes to improve their writing of essays, most students (S1, S6, S2fu, S4fu, S5fu, S9fu, S10fu), nevertheless, in general agreed that the language course helped them develop their writing skills, made them aware of advanced level writing requirements (S10fu), gave them opportunities to write spontaneously on any topic (S2fu) which was reiterated by 88 out of 99 respondents in PIQ, and encouraged them to give their own opinions (S4fu). S1, acknowledging the benefits of the Language course, reported that it helped them improve their language, style and way of thinking. She said (Appendix 20 and 21):

our FC classes give us a new direction, how to ...think on new topics, new ideas. Many new topics are added in the FC book and it is just like a boon, it is boon for us. It helps us to write an essay...in a more improved way and I haven't written an essay like that in the school and college...uh...just I have learnt it from the university classes (S1 ll. 262-269)

Like S1, S7 also observed that it was in this course that they were told about the structure of an essay. She thought that her writing skills had improved from what it was in the past.

S2fu acknowledged that she learnt about topic sentences, supporting details and concluding sentences from her language class which helped her with literature essay writing. Moreover, if teachers gave them more “guidelines” in the language classes as to how literature essays should be written then the language course could become more relevant to them as most of their courses were literature based for which they had to write long essays. This was because in terms of structure and organisation the two were compatible (S6 ll.658-662; S8 ll.84-98; S1fu2 ll.22-34; S2fu; S4fu; S5fu; S9fu; S10fu). It was necessary in both language and literature essays for the writer to indulge in imagination and free thinking to express his/her views (S4fu) in addition to giving arguments, evidence and reasons to whatever was stated S1fu1 (ll.539-541). Details of this will be followed up in section 7.2.2.2.

S6 reported it was also possible to transfer the skills from one course to another, and that “there’s a fine line between the two” (S6 ll.616-617). For instance, she could use a quotation from a poem in order to write a language essay if it is relevant to the topic. However, S6 also suggested that the present language course was not “useful enough” (l.421) and that the English Department needed a “more comprehensive” (l.380) language course to help literature students.

(iv) The role of memorisation

This aspect of memorisation was a common point of discussion in every interview and students had very interesting stories to tell. This was a completely new topic that emerged that I had not anticipated. In particular with students, I did not think that they would perceive memorisation/rote learning so critically. One noticeable aspect in the interviews was that students tended to differentiate writing and memorisation as two different skills rather than the latter being a strategy used for writing.

S1 regretted that writing physically in class or at home using one's own ideas was never encouraged by her teachers at school and college, an idea also reiterated by S2 (ll.245-246) and S6 (ll.1038-1043). When asked to comment on what was emphasised, S1 replied, "on reading, basically memorising" (ll.41-42). In one of her follow up interviews, she observed:

Memorising helps us to cut a good figure in the examination but writing on my own is a way which helps us to test myself, to make me able to write in more improved ways day by day,... a more improved writer who can write on any topic on any subject in the near future. (S1fu1 ll.602-608)

Often questions are repeated in the examination and the students can easily predict what they might get in the examinations. So, they memorise five to ten topics and can be certain that they would get common topics in the examination (S3 ll.459-474, S6 ll.1038-1067, S9, S10 ll.157-204). In addition to that, S9 (ll.230-235) said some teachers suggested two or three essay topics, and students would memorise only those. S5

(ll.1279-1281) revealed that teachers would even write the essays for them in the past which they memorised and produced verbatim in examinations.

Time pressure was another factor why students memorised essays opined S10fu. Adding to that, he stated that when he tried to write using his ideas and in his own words he got lower marks and being discouraged he reverted to memorising answers. S10fu also mentioned the same with his L1 essay writing which will be discussed in sections 7.2.2.1.v, and 7.2.2.4.1.iii. S9 confessed that during his SSC he thought that paragraph writing was a “matter of memorising” (l.389), but when he was doing his HSC, from one particular teacher he learnt (see 7.2.2.1.i.) that paragraph writing was a “matter of thinking” (S9 l.386). S3 (ll.217-221) observed that in his SSC he memorised not only English essays but also *Bangla* essays which he did without understanding. In the past, he thought that memorisation was a good way to obtain high marks because when he tried writing things instantly on his own he would commit many mistakes, but now he thought otherwise (S3fu). S3 (ll.248-279) even reflected on the drawbacks of rote learning. Firstly, if he did not get a question from the prescribed “suggestion” (l.249) then he would fail to write anything. Secondly, if for some reason he forgot one line or a paragraph from the middle, then he would drift to a different paragraph which would become “linkless” (l.276).

(v) Transfer from L1 literature writing

Some students, S8 commented, were influenced by their experience of writing L1 literature essays. For example, when S8 (ll.802-853) was shown one of his essay

Introductions where he had a long Introduction with unnecessary information about the writer, he commented that this was the style students used while writing L1 essays and teachers never objected to students providing irrelevant information about the writer's life even if the question did not require students to focus on that. S8 (ll.857-874) added that now he realised from the feedback he received from his university lecturers that such writing is not acceptable and that essays should be focussed from the beginning.

According to S1fu1, all the writings she did for Bangla literature were done without teacher guidance. She felt that if teachers had showed them how to write for Bangla literature then she could have applied those skills while writing English literature essays at the university because it was only the language medium that was different. She gave an illustration of what happened for her Bangla literature classes at school and college on regular basis:

... the teacher used to come and read the story, it happened in every college. After reading the story she would explain the things we had problems with, like any hard lines. Lots of students don't understand the lines of Rabindronath's works. The next day we would start another story. (S1fu1 ll.371-376) Translated

Details on how S10 began the Introduction of *Bangla* essays in the past are discussed in section 7.2.2.4.1.iii.

7.2.2.2 Relationships between English language and literature essays

(i) Degree of difficulty of literature essays

Despite both possessing the three parts, Introduction-Body-Conclusion structure, nine out of ten students (Students 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,9,10) opined that they found it much more difficult to write literature essays compared to language essays in the First year (PIQ 7.1.2.3). The main reason given for that was that most of them had not read English literature before. Only S6 and S8 had read some literary pieces in their HSC because they were now in their Third year and they followed the old syllabus. Even S6 who had read English literature before coming to the University and who enjoyed writing for literature found literature essay writing in the First year difficult.

Concerning her study of English literature at school and college, S6 informed the literature questions in the past were very “straightforward” (l.42) and not critical at all (ll.39-45). Once at university, she found it extremely challenging to give her own opinions in a literature essay because she was always worried that her claims might not be accepted by the teacher (ll.109-125; 7.2.2.1.ii.). However, in the Third year she felt confident in giving her opinions because she was aware of the writing conventions of the Department (ll.859-868; 916-923). According to her, preparing English notes was a more complex process than any other subject, because the basic information for most subjects was found in a book which was not the case with English essays (S6 ll.569-582).

Literature essays were mainly dependent on students' readings and understanding of the literary text (S1fu, S2 ll.47-48, S3 ll.622-637, S5 ll.106-108, 178-183). They required students to first read the text thoroughly, then with imagination, creativity, depth of thought and aesthetic dimension understand the authors' views about the topic (S5 ll.162-166), read different critics to get other perspectives (S2) and comprehend the real meaning behind the ambiguous layers of meanings of the figurative language (S1fu, S3 l.637). Literature writing was difficult because critical analysis was an essential requirement for literature essays (S2fu). Literature essays required students to concentrate on "analysis" instead of narrating the story, S7 observed (ll.734-735). Students were "expected to be more argumentative and analytical" (ll.458-459). She added:

We should not tell the tale but we should show something more, something analytical, beyond the story. We will have to have the ability to think critically. (S7 ll.739-742)

On the other hand, S7 reported that by being grammatically correct and maintaining rules was sufficient for a language essay (S7 ll.751-752). She said that if she was writing a paragraph on a language topic she would be concerned with giving a topic sentence, specific details, evidences and a concluding sentence (ll.462-465). Most students (S1, S1fu, S2 ll.185-203, S3, S5 ll.76-78, S7) found language essays easier because they were personal and could be written by expressing own thoughts and feelings (S5 l.78). The essays were not text related, they were mainly "free writing" and so there was no "binding" as to what needed to be written. Concerning the language course tasks and language essays, S1fu revealed that she found them similar to her HSC

and SSC work, as identified in PIQ (7.1.2.3). S7 stated that teachers provided writing instructions for language essays but nothing of that sort was imparted for writing literature essays which made the latter difficult to write. For simple literature essays, like character description or questions like ‘How the character of Darcy and Elizabeth were developed in the first ten chapters of *Pride and Prejudice*?’, it was possible to apply the rules given in the language classes she reported which were inapplicable for more analytical-critical questions (ll.779-796), because such essays were not practised in the language classes (ll.808-809).

According to S10 although he could get all the information for the literature essays if he read the texts and criticism, the process of writing was lengthier and complex. One had to put forward supporting ideas, evidence and reasons from the text and then explain that as to why that is said whereas the language essays were simply “descriptive”, “informative” and factual where one only had to arrange the information in order (ll.322-344; S10fu).

Only S8 opined that he found writing for literature easier than language essays because the text provided the content and ideas for the essay. S8 informed me:

As there is something to understand here, it doesn't hinder the writing ability rather it helps in the writing (S8 ll. 575-577 translated)

Most of the students, including S8, agreed that although there were differences between literature and language essays in terms of content and analytical depth, they were similar when it came to structure and organisation.

7.2.2.3 Responses to essay topics and rubrics

From PIQ feedback (7.1.2.4), 61 students out of 99 responded that they paid attention to question wordings before writing the essay and as I was a bit unsure of the answer I made it a point to probe further. The issues students were mainly asked about were regarding the kinds of topics they were required to write on in the two courses in terms of content, and what topics they thought would help them more to develop as writers. In addition to those, students were also asked whether they understood the rubrics of the topics before they set about answering the questions.

(i) Lack of attention on instructional words by students

In contrast to the positive PIQ (7.1.2.4) responses, in the interviews nine out of the ten students stated that they did not analyse the questions before writing. So, I felt this indicated that students had not comprehended the question for the PIQ. S2 had an interesting story to tell about what she did when she got a question or essay to write on. She said that it never occurred to her that she had to look at the question wordings to identify whether the essay was going to be descriptive or argumentative. It would just happen “automatically” she responded; she would “just understand without thinking” how she should write (S2 ll.122-127). She elaborated:

At that time I had the possibility of committing mistakes. Since I didn't have an understanding of what I should do with instructional verbs before, even if I made mistakes I didn't realise. May be sometimes I did them right and sometimes wrong. (S2 ll. 163-166 translated)

According to S6, she personally did pay attention to the question instructions when she began an essay, but once she got into the flow of writing she would often forget about the particular wordings. Commenting on other First year students, she said that most of the students “usually prepare a note, memorise it and no matter what the question is they just write what they have memorised” (S6 ll. 316-319). S1fu reflected that she would often start answering questions without looking at the instructions carefully. Elaborating on the reason behind attaining a low grade in her tutorial test on the following topic: ‘Evaluate Katherine Mansfield’s ‘The Garden Party’ as a short story discussing its strengths and weaknesses’, she informed that she now realised that she neither evaluated it as a short story nor discussed its strengths and weakness and failed to fulfill the expectations of the teacher, and this was a familiar practice with most students.

(ii) Benefits of argumentative and descriptive topics

Argumentative questions were not taught in the language classes and students (S7 ll. 410-427, S10fu) suggested it would be better if they were because then these skills could be applied in developing literature essay writing skills. S7 (ll. 437-438) also observed that no matter how descriptive literature questions were, they should be analytical. Absence of analysis will result in students achieving lower grades. Similarly, S10fu informed that analytical, critical and argumentative topics were more useful in

developing students' tertiary level writing ability, and suggested that these should be included more in language classes in lieu of subjective topics.

Opinions about using argumentative and descriptive topics to develop students' writing abilities with more practical emphasis given on the former were also made (S2fu, S4fu, S5fu). Argumentative topics, students reported, were more difficult to write and they enhanced students' thinking and critical power, issues that were essential in literature essays. I was also surprised when students spoke on the benefits of descriptive writing. Narrative topics, they felt, were useful because they developed students' imaginative power (S4fu, S1fu) and enhanced their competence to handle unprepared topics and write extempore (S9fu).

7.2.2.4 The role of structure in language and literature essays

The issue of structure is a vital relationship point but as it is important to this study details of it is discussed together in this separate section and not in the previous one, 7.2.2.3.

(i) Structure is important for both language and literature essays

All the students unanimously agreed that structure was important and observed that the three parts, Introduction-Body-Conclusion, were integral parts in both language and literature essays. Moreover, eight students (S6 ll.658-662; S8 ll.84-98; S1fu2 ll.22-34; S2fu; S4fu; S5fu; S9fu; S10fu) found the essays were similar structurally, but different in style and content matter.

Most students (S1fu, S2, S3 ll.217-220, 274-279, S5fu, S7 ll.109-113, S10 ll.647-696, S10fu) interviewed also opined that they were not taught to structure essays in the past and found it very difficult at the university, like the responses in PIQ (7.1.2.5). S7 felt that most likely teachers teaching at lower levels were not conscious about the structure, the topic sentence, specific details themselves, and hence, did not teach students those things (S7 ll.109-113).

Two points, one of similarity and another of difference, were pointed out by S8 between the two types of essays. He reported that structurally language and literature essays may be similar but stylistically they were different (S8 ll.94-98). He reported:

We have to write introduction, and a body and conclusion... the language may not be the same but process is similar in writing language essays and the literature essays ... stylistically ... I think they are different. Because in literature essays we tend to use more figurative languages and we try to give ... our opinion and try to justify that. So in literature essays we use quotations or examples (S8 ll.84-98)

S6fu personally disliked maintaining the “rigid” rules while writing an essay. She added that as long as the information was relevant she did not mind breaking them. She also enjoyed trying out new ways of writing and changing her styles in her essays, something she did since her childhood when she began writing for magazines. Literature according to her allowed such “flexibility”; she could present her personal opinion with more freedom than she would do with a history essay (S6fu).

S5fu while discussing issues on the structure of the essay mentioned that she was made aware of the concept of the five-paragraph essay by her present language teacher in class, that it consisted of two paragraphs (1 + 1) for Introduction and Conclusion and three for Body paragraphs without giving any details as to what benefits there were following this method. Having imparted that much information, the teacher asked students to prepare an essay at home using the method. Another interesting point S5fu mentioned was that when she wrote language essays she kept the writing rules in mind but while writing the literature essays during examinations the concept of structuring did not arise in her mind because she was always thinking of how well she could answer the question, analyse the text and inform the examiner, something S10 also felt (11.647-696).

Students had many opinions on the structure of essays generally, but specific information about the three parts of language and literature essays had to be probed during the follow-ups. Details on individual parts of the essays are below.

7.2.2.4.1 The 'Introduction'

(i) Difficulty in focussing the main idea

S2fu and S5fu responded that they attempted to start the essay with an initial sentence that answered the question as a strategy to keep to the focus. Others (S10fu, S9fu), however, found bringing the whole theme in one sentence to be problematic. S10fu revealed that he always had problems while writing the Introduction and the topic sentences because he did not know how to follow the rules. This idea was reiterated by S2fu. S5fu observed that in order to improve students being more focused in writing

both language and literature essays, specific questions instead of only titles for language essay writing should be set so that they can be practised in class.

(ii) Language essay Introductions have more variety

S10fu observed that language essay Introductions have more variety than literature ones; they can begin with anecdotes, by comparing and contrasting, with quotations and so on.

Similarly, S5fu also informed that there were more options to begin the language essays since they normally did not have specific questions. In order to illustrate her comments, she reported how for her final examination essay topic, ‘Importance of co-curricular activities’, she began the essay by defining what co-curricular activities meant.

(iii) Delaying Thesis consciously (an alternative view)

In S10’s response about what he would write in the Introduction to a question on the ‘Character of Shylock’ he reported that he would begin by writing something about Shakespeare and Shakespeare’s depiction of Shylock’s character (S10 ll.727-730). When he was probed as to why he would write about the writer, he informed that this was how essays “traditionally” (l.749) began and they were encouraged to begin essay Introductions with the author (l.849), an idea reiterated by S9fu. S10 (ll.790-821) also observed that in the past he would wait till the end to present the central idea of his essay because he thought that is how it should be done. This idea was conceptualised from his readings of novels where the reader had to wait till the end for the suspense and the main thing being revealed. This view changed when he became aware of the

importance of thesis statement and focussing on the topic after reading books on essay writing (S10fu).

When we wrote any answer traditionally we started with the writer. In H.S.C when we wrote about the character of 'Bilashi' we wrote about Sharatchandra's position in our Bangla literature. Then after a short discussion on the writer we wrote about 'Bilashi'. The most common note available would begin with 'Sharatchandra is one of the most revered literateurs in Bangla literature'. We used adjectives like these. Now, when I write about Shakespeare I can write something like 'Shakespeare wrote about Shylock at a time when the society was vindictive towards the Jews' ... then I can say that at that time the anti-Jewish feeling was very strong. It created a dramatic sensation at that time... No, I'll not explain. ... Then after giving something about Shylock I'll start the main theme [which]... will not be in the introduction, just a hint will be present. I'll not give my opinion then...I want to give the main theme in the conclusion. After explaining everything in the body I'll write in the conclusion that, as my opinion of Shylock has been asked, I liked this thing of Shylock and although some things are bad about him he still deserved more rights as a human being...[The main theme/focus]... can be given in the introduction, I prefer to give it in the conclusion...I feel that if I give my opinion at the beginning then I won't get good ideas. I can write the conclusion clearly if I give my reasons and explanations first. But if I give my opinion at the beginning then maybe I will not be able to give a good conclusion. That is why I prefer to answer the question and give my opinion in the conclusion. (S10 11.749-821 Translated)

When S6 was shown one of her marked essays, where she got 'A', and was asked to comment on her long two-paragraph Introduction, she commented that she had problems linking ideas before and certainly felt that she could link her essays better now being in the Third year because she was writing more now. Interestingly enough she added that she tended to have longer introductions and, somewhat like S10, preferred to give the Central idea a little later (S6 Fu).

7.2.2.4.2 The 'Body'

(i) Literature Body more analytical

S5fu observed that the function of the Body paragraphs was to provide evidence and description for the main topic in both language and literature essays, with the exception being that the body paragraphs in the latter were more analytical and critical because the evidence discussed were mainly based on particular literary texts or by the use of quotations or paraphrase of quotations. Discussing how she constructed the Body of her topic 'Co-curricular Activities', she informed that she gave examples of co-curricular activities, explained them and showed how important each activity was. She followed the same pattern for literature essay Body.

S1fu2 (11.24-32) said that she knew that the Body would have five or six paragraphs where she had to give evidence of the facts presented in the Introduction to strengthen the views. However, in reality her grades in her tutorial examinations and final year results suggested she was not doing this successfully. This was something she realised herself, as revealed in her follow-ups (S1fu2 11.4-46). While discussing one of her tutorial essays on the following topic: 'Discuss how the Financial Expert is a post-colonial novel', where she got quite a low mark and it was evident from the Body that she neither elaborated nor analysed the evidence and merely wrote a summary of the story. A similar view was expressed in 7.2.2.3.i. where she reports about her lack of attention to the essay prompts.

(ii) Reiteration of Thesis Statement

S10fu and S2fu felt that reiteration of thesis in the topic sentence was necessary in keeping track of the focus in both language and literature essay and also for linking the ideas for both language and literature essays. However, S2fu added that when she wrote her essays she could not in most cases bring it in.

(iii) Body paragraphs can be organised better if more time is provided

S2fu and S4fu were followed up together and both unanimously agreed that they could not arrange their supporting points and evidence well during examinations. Referring to that, S4fu further said that often she was unable to prioritise her points and kept writing randomly whatever came to her mind. She felt that this could be avoided if they were given more time to write, something that S10fu also mentioned and also evident in PIQ (7.1.2.5).

S8 (ll.299-311) reported, when he wrote essays for examinations in the First year, particularly literature essays, his main concern was to provide as much information as possible within a limited time due to which his essays often lacked organisation.

As we had a fixed time we couldn't organise the writing properly... whatever points I knew and that came to my mind I wrote down, in small paragraphs, I thought it would be better for me to write as much I could.. When I wrote this I didn't have the time to link the previous paragraph to the next one. I felt that I should just write down the points I knew in small paragraphs. (S8 ll.299-311) Translated

The 'Body' paragraphs according to S9fu of a language essay were fewer in number because he felt that lots of information could be brought together, whereas, literature essay 'Body' paragraphs were shorter as there were numerous points to dwell on and he felt they should be done separately.

7.2.2.4.3 The 'Conclusion'

(i) Writer's position more clearly expressed in language essays

S5fu reported, the 'Conclusion' should summarise the main evidence and the most significant point was restated with the writer's point of view that came out more vividly in language essays, whereas the literature essay 'Conclusions' were shorter and the writer's voice did not always come out that strongly.

S2fu observed that although for the 'Co-curricular Activities' essay 'Body' she discussed the importance of each activity separately, in the conclusion she made a final statement about the importance of co-curricular activities along with suggestions of what needs to be done. Compared to language essays, literature essay 'Conclusions' were shorter and they would not have suggestions, S2fu added. She insisted that even if it was a one-line conclusion, like repeating the Introduction, she would have one nevertheless.

(ii) Literature essay Conclusion should include author's perspective

A summarised version of the main points discussed in the 'Body' was sufficient for a language essay 'Conclusion' commented S9fu. For a literature essay he reported that in

addition to the summary of points, students should also present what the author of text observed about the topic. S1fu2 (ll.15-18; 30-32) reported that the concluding paragraph should restate the idea stated in the Introduction to put more emphasis on the ideas. Views about how S10 would like to have his thesis delayed till the end has already been cited in 7.2.2.4.1.iii.

7.3 Discussion

I now summarise the main points which emerged from the student questionnaire and interviews as follows:

7.3.1 Memorisation is detrimental to writing

This concept of memorisation which students overlapped with rote learning surprisingly was also clearly identified by students as a negative influence in their writing. Sometimes students even saw them as two separate entities. Writing they felt was more to do with individual production and creation and memorisation equivalent to an activity without “understanding” and “thinking”. All students opined, rote memorisation retarded their ability to think and write on their own and they already in their first year realised that it was not going to help them in the long run at the university. Students viewed that rote learning proved useful for them at secondary and higher secondary school levels where the topics were few and predictable and could easily be memorised, but not at the university because the syllabus here is vast and tasks required them to think, analyse, understand and gain indepth knowledge of the subject matter.

These views correspond with the concept of “surface” and “deep” approaches to learning respectively used by Marton and Saljo (1976). The technique of “parrot writing” or “imitation” (Crème and Lea 2003: 96) was only helpful when they had to quote lines from the text but not when personal understanding is sought. This finding, thus, did not completely adhere to Au and Enstwistle’s (1999) study on Chinese learners’ use of rote memorisation with understanding for being successful in Western universities. One possible reason for such variation could be that students considered English literature and English language to be disciplines where the commitment to understanding and interpreting a text or an issue meant the development of talents like insight, creativity, imagination, critiquing and intellect as stated by Robertson (2000). It was interesting to note that students considered writing independently as a special need and tertiary requirement and regretted the fact that they were not made to realise this earlier in their educational life.

7.3.2 English literature essay writing more challenging than English language essays

Most students found literature essay writing more challenging than language essays. The main reason for this was because they were required to undergo a number of stages before they could undertake the process of writing a literature essay. It was essential for students to first read the particular literary text or the texts in concern, think about it critically, understand its complete meanings and evaluate it from multiple perspectives, and then present that with logic, personal opinion, a position, insight and imagination in an organised, coherent manner. Another difficulty with literature essays was the

detection of what counted as evidence. Students were often unable to distinguish paraphrase of the text from specific supporting evidence. Students are required to understand and identify both 'global' and 'discrete' skills to be successful in literature studies, as has been observed by Spiro (1991). On the other hand, most students generally found the language essays easier to write because they were basically experiential topics and could simply be written on the basis of what they see, enjoy and talk. Students think that although language essay topics have limitless boundaries, because of the predictability of 'common topics' they do not worry so much about writing them.

7.3.3 Importance of structure for both English literature and language essays

Although students were not provided with any specific knowledge of the structuring an essay except that it had to possess the three main generic parts, students realised at the university for the first time in the language class that there was more to structuring than simply having Introduction, Body and Conclusion, and that structure was important to organise ideas in the essay. During timed examinations if a student wanted to have well-structured essays, it was good to be aware of the rules of structure of essays, be it Recount or Discussion, because structuring was extremely difficult when one had to do it mentally. However, they also felt that knowledge was not sufficient for them to produce appropriately structured essays because they were not practised sufficiently in class. In addition to that, they also complained that no teacher, either in their language class or tutorial classes, ever made them practise literature essays. As a result, they all

remained unaware of what they specifically had to write and inform the reader in the different parts of the literature essay. There were, however, a few students who in spite of agreeing that writing by knowing the rules is beneficial, also maintained that they would like to have a style of their own and would not mind breaking the rules. This I feel is possible to do for students who have reached a high level of language proficiency and basics of writing and can now afford to experiment with individual styles. All in all, structure was a vital issue for language essays whereas for literature essays content and evaluation of that content was an added essentiality along with structure.

7.3.4 Understanding question wordings and need for argumentative/ analytical topics

Diving down straight into the subject without interpreting the question was a common characteristic with most students in the past and on most occasions they got away with good marks. However, their opinions have now changed at the university as they realised that if one produced off-the-point answers, no matter how well one wrote marks would not be easy to obtain.

Although students felt the necessity for practising descriptive and personal essays to enhance their imaginative and extemporaneous writing skills, there were more concerns regarding the need for more argumentative and analytical essay topics as that would help develop thinking power as well as the ability to criticise anything which was essential for literature essays.

7.3.5 Lack of awareness of teachers

Students expressed dissatisfaction at the fact that teachers simply take it for granted that students would know how to write a literature essay and start taking tutorial examinations on very critical topics from the very beginning without having even given any instructions as how to write the literature essay. Teachers never took notice of whether they needed to be taught the requirements of writing for literature courses and what they were looking for from students. Students felt that they should be clarified of these confusions at the beginning so that they could study with less inhibition.

7.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, students' views about different aspects of their writing experience, from the past and present, were reported with particular reference to the writing of English language and literature essays. The chapter ends with a discussion of the major issues that were raised from the questionnaire and interview responses. It also aims to answer Research Q3 and Q4. The next chapter will gather contextual information from the more expert members of the discourse community.

CHAPTER 8: ANALYSING TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENTS' ESSAYS

8.0 Introduction

In order to get a deeper insight into the essays written by students it was necessary to learn about the practices and perceptions of teachers because of their pivotal role in the teaching and learning process and also their understanding of the complex processes in the classroom. Hence, this chapter presents the data I gathered from interviews conducted with teachers teaching courses in the First year to find out what they thought about the essays that were produced by the students. Like Chapter 7, this chapter is also presented in three main sections: 1. Methodology, 2. Findings and, 3. Discussion.

With teachers, data were gathered from interviews only. However, before conducting the main interviews (T1-T8)²⁰, a pilot interview was conducted to try out the type of questions I would ask my teacher participants and check whether the responses would help answer my research questions. These data attempted to gather information for answering research questions 3, 5 and 6 which were further corroborated with the findings of RQ 1 (Chapter 4), and RQ 2 (Chapter 6).

The chapter begins with a brief section describing how the Pilot Interview was conducted with its outcomes. Then it undertakes to describe the main interviews with Methodology (8.2.1), Findings (8.2.2) and Discussion (8.2.3) sections. The process of

²⁰ T1-T8 stands for the eight Teachers interviewed

analysis (8.2.2) is not discussed in detail as it follows the same procedure of coding of categories used with Student interviews (Chapter 7, section 7.2.2).

8.1 Pilot interview

I selected my pilot interview participant who was doing her MA in ELT at CAL (CELTE) at the time. She taught English communication skills, technical communication and business communication at the National University of Sciences and Technology for 7 years in Pakistan. For a short time, she also taught English literature in the same institute. The purpose was to investigate the suitability of the kinds of the questions I had in mind. The issues I mainly enquired about were:

- What did she, as a teacher of English, mainly value in an essay?
- How were English literature essays different from language essays?
- How were the different parts of the essays structured?
- What did she think of the essay topics that were set for students?
- How did the students handle the topics and the wordings used in the topics?

Although the teacher participant belonged to a different context, the teaching-learning environment was found to be similar with Bangladesh and this familiarity made the interview questions very meaningful. The responses provided rich data and assured me of the success of the interview. Due to word limitations I am only presenting the main issues that emerged from this interview: 1) Organisation, clarity and originality of thought and argument are more important than technical perfection, 2) Accuracy and

linguistic clarity are more important in language essays against content and stronger linguistic dexterity in literature essays, 3) Broad generalisation in the Introductions is a cultural expression, 4) Body should have relevant evidences and illustrations to justify points raised in Introductions, 5) Conclusions should have a sense of rounding off, 6) Argumentative topics will enable students to critique issues, 7) Language classes are excellent platforms for making students into thinking individuals.

I designed my interview guide and semi-structured interview questions (Appendix 19 and 17) to be conducted with the main interviews on the basis of the pilot interview responses.

8.2 Teacher interviews

Eight (T1-T8) interviews were carried out. Of the eight teachers, at least two follow ups were conducted with seven teachers (in some cases, like T1, T2 and T4, three follow ups with each teacher were conducted). Each interview ran for 35-60 minutes. The main Interviews were transcribed verbatim. A couple of follow up interviews were also transcribed. However, most of the follow ups were carried out at different stages of the research by informal conversations which were not taped and transcribed. They were conducted by keeping notes. A discussion of my approach to the analysis of interview transcripts in general is given briefly in Chapter 3 (3.3.4.2.3) and in detail in Chapter 7 (7.2.2) and will not be presented here.

8.2.1 Teacher interview design and methodology

For the teacher interviews a detailed question guide (Appendix 19) was designed for myself and a set of eight semi-structured questions (See Appendix 17) for teachers. These questions were designed on the basis of the findings and discrepancies of the pilot interview. In addition to that, a set of follow up Interview questions (Appendix 18) after transcribing the original interviews was also designed to get more focused information. The following are the eight teacher participants I interviewed at different intervals of my research project.

Teachers' profile (T1-T8)

T1 majored in English Literature but has been teaching both English literature and language courses for the past six years. He was among one of the younger teachers I interviewed because he was directly involved in teaching and marking the English language course and was able to shed light on the problems faced by students while writing for literature as he taught literature too.

T2 had done her undergraduate degree in English Literature but completed her postgraduate degree in Applied Linguistics and ELT from Dhaka and Warwick and she has been teaching for the last fourteen years. She mainly taught linguistic courses, but in her tutorial classes she also discussed English literature. In addition to that, she taught, set questions and graded the scripts for the English language course for twelve years. At present, she was coordinating the course.

T3 had majored in English literature but she did a second postgraduate degree in Applied Linguistics from Essex. She has been teaching for the last 28 years. She mainly taught linguistic courses but discussed literature in her tutorial classes and had also taught the language course for a number of years. At present she is undertaking her PhD at King's College, London.

T4 had her second degrees in English literature from Dhaka and Hawaii and was pursuing her doctoral studies on Shakespeare. In addition to teaching literature courses, she also taught language through literature and academic writing.

T5 had done her undergraduate degree in English literature but completed her postgraduate degree in Applied Linguistics and ELT from Dhaka University and Columbia University. She was the only teacher who had been teaching only English linguistics and language for the last fourteen years. She also set questions for the language course and graded the scripts.

T6 was a professor of English and one of the most senior members of the faculty. She majored in English literature, did her PhD on Emily Dickinson from George Washington University and teaches both English literature and writing. She was one of the initiators of the English language course in the Arts faculty.

T7 came from the English literature stream and has been involved in teaching and marking both literature and language courses for the last six years.

T8 was also from the English literature stream but also had a second post graduate degree from Warwick in Applied Linguistics and ELT and has been involved in teaching and marking both literature and language courses for the last eight years. She also taught the pre-sessional courses at CAL (formerly CELTE).

8.2.2 Teacher interview data analysis and findings

The teacher interviews generated rich data. These interviews were more detailed and were conducted with follow ups which gave rise to interesting categories. The same procedure used to analyse students' perceptions data (Section 7.2.2) was applied to teachers' perceptions, too, and therefore will not be described again.

Although identifying students' writing problems is not one of my research aims, during the Pilot Interview I realised that the teacher spoke extensively on students' writing problem areas. As a result, I decided to frame this as a question in the interviews and the Pre-Interview questionnaire. Surprisingly, in all the main interviews both students and teachers spoke about the problems. I also realised that it was a good way to find out whether teachers felt that structure and organisation was a problematic area with students' essay writing. It also helped in identifying what kind of writing teachers considered as successful when they marked the essays. In most cases, the issue of students' writing problems was automatically raised by the teachers as it happened also with the students. I suppose it was a pre-conceived idea with the teachers that since my study was to do with essay writing, they must talk about the lapses they found in

students' essay writing. Hence, category 8.2.2.5 (Factors affecting student writing of English Language and Literature essays) does not directly answer any of my research questions but helps in providing contextual information and understanding the situation better.

The next sections provide an account of the major categories in relation with their sub-categories that were derived from the teacher responses, what they think about students' essays and why students do what they do within the given context. Like Chapter 7, here too I gained my information in three distinct ways:

1. Responses that directly answered my questions
2. Answers to my questions that surprised me (8.2.2.3.1.ii and iii)
3. New topics that were brought up by the interviewees (8.2.2.1.iii, 8.2.2.2.iv, 8.2.2.5.iii)

8.2.2.1 Espoused values and opinions about actual practice

Teachers were asked about what they valued in students' English language and literature essays and the following categories of responses were derived:

(i) Espoused values while marking essays in general

For me it was important to find out the criteria/values on the basis of which teachers marked because there are no explicit assessment criteria available to teachers in our department for marking examination essays. Teachers use their subjective judgement to assess the scripts. Since I classified the essays into high grades and low grades, it was

important for me to find out the values teachers generally had when they marked a script, and hence, made it a point to ask them what they thought were important criteria for a well written essay in the two contexts. For this reason I use the term ‘espoused values’ in marking scripts rather than assessment criteria.

Among the features that teachers mainly looked for and valued in students’ essays were the ability to think for themselves (T6 ll.39-40) or possessing the ‘comprehension factor’ (T4 l. 7-11), ability to write on their own (T2 ll.157-158), good organisation and structure (T1 ll.252-260, 406-408, 450, 537-538; T4 ll.21, 292-307; T7 l.12, 47-50; T8 ll.35-39), unity between ideas (T5 ll.267-268, T2 ll.431-445; T8 ll.40-46), good expressions (T7 l.57), accuracy (T5 l.115), support (T5 l.115; T4 l.44; T7 ll.178-189), proficiency of the language (T7 ll.11-12), content (T7 l.12), use of cross referencing in literature essays and associated external knowledge (T3 l.425; T4 ll.121-122; T5 ll.165-166; T6 ll.316-319; T7 ll.178-189), well constructed, clearly developed argument (T1 ll.451-452; T5 ll.50-54, 64-70).

T5 opined that “as far as good writing is concerned ... whether it’s literature or language [essays] good writing has similar qualities. It should be well supported. Ideas should be unified and there should be coherence...” (T5 ll. 388-393). During all of T1’s interviews, he emphasised mostly on organisation. When I asked him what he meant by “good organisation”, he commented:

Good organisation . . . the first thing I'd say...in a good essay, ... thesis sentence, topic sentence—they should be there very clearly, visible... Secondly the links should be there. Now the thing that happens with literature teachers is that many a times when they mark, they go with the flow. If the language is good they tend to give it good marks even if it is not properly organised. (T1 ll. 461-468)

Furthermore, T1fu²¹ opined that the way students used “discursive logic” in their essays was also an aspect of “good organisation”. If students today were unable to use it then according to him they were unfit to read literature. In a nutshell, “good organisation” was all about structure, which was a union between interconnected ideas, sentences, and features of cohesion. Although grammatical accuracy was considered important for students of English in their writing, it was not prioritised on the same level as organisation, argumentation, comprehension factor specially when it came to discussing literature essays. Grammar was not the first thing teachers looked for in an essay (T1fu).

In an essay, T7fu generally looked at whether the student possessed the following elements—organisation, unity, diction and content. She added that the “bare framework” should be there through which the content of the essay would progress whether it is a language essay or a literature one.

(ii) Language essays easier to write than literature essays

Most teachers (T1, T1fu, T2fu, T3, T7, T8), like students, observed that literature essays “pose more problems” (T7 l.133) than language essays and were more difficult to write. Even before embarking on writing, students must first read the text thoroughly (T1

²¹ Teacher 1 follow up

l.151; T3 ll.258-259; T8 ll.60-67), to “understand” (T3 l.257) it which not too many students do (T2 ll.498-506; T3 ll.171-179; T4 ll.211-220; T6 ll.248-259). Then, they must support their ideas with “secondary readings”, “quotations” and “short phrases” directly from the text, making “cross references” (T7 ll.178-189; T7fu; T6 ll.316-319). The brilliance of a literature essay is revealed in the ability of students to cross refer to a number of texts and associated knowledge and connect them with the topic they are writing on. The treatment of different issues in the text is also conducted in a more “complex” way (T3 l.271) where the “psychological aspect” (T3 l.268) of the issue with facts and figures come to play a significant role and requires students to go “beyond the basics” (T3 l.284). She reported,

When we say literature there has to be a difference. ...it's not recounting of facts ... and ... I would go into gory details, go much more into the suffering, which is perhaps not possible in a language essay ... in a language essay there is a word limit. In literature generally we don't give them a word limit... They have an hour to write ... with language essays we generally say write 250 words... It's very difficult to decompress all that information into 1-2 pages, it's difficult. (T3 ll.366-402)

The literature essays are, thus, more “intense” (l.294), “demanding” (l.296), “probing” (l.283), and during examinations it becomes difficult for students to focus on what to write because “many ideas keep coming” (T7 l.131). However, 80% of the students did not read critical essays on the texts (T1 ll.347-359). Teachers regretted that even the core texts were not read by students. T7 felt that 20% of the First year student population did primary and secondary reading, with 60% only depending on the primary texts and notebooks. This implied that there was another 20% who did not read even the primary text and depended only on the notebooks, an idea that T1, T2, T3, T4 and T6

indicated in their interviews. It was appreciated if students were able to use quotations correctly in the right context. Grades would increase for contextualised use of relevant quotations but students should not overuse them (T2fu) just to show that they have done some extra reading and impress the teacher (T4 ll.132-134).

In order to explain the difference T3 cited how same issues or topics, like ‘analysing a character’, would differ while writing the two types of essays. According to her, for a language essay one can just get away with the basics. An average student according to T3 would just give “a physical description, a little bit about that person, how he interacts...not a complex thing” (T3 ll. 281-284). She added, in order to write about a character from a novel, for instance Elizabeth, it is “not just what I think of Elizabeth, it’s what Darcy, Jane, Mrs Bennet, Bingley...together...what others contribute to the making of that particular character” (T3 ll. 303-306). Students will have to “glean information” (T3 l.308) about what others say about the character, think about that, understand, bring in all the psychological aspects of the character (T3 ll. 267-271) and then analyse using more details and “precise adjectives to bring out the attributes in the character” (T3 ll. 336-337).

Not only was the treatment of the topics different, there was also a disparity in the topics themselves (T4). T4 (ll.668-669) observed that 99% of the language topics are repetitive from their secondary school writings. Because of the predictable nature of the language essays, students prepare them in advance and write effortlessly (T7 ll.106-119). They were “descriptive” (T3 l.426), “experiential” (T3 l.568) and “totally personal” (T3 l.569)

whereas the literature essays were very “critical” (l.533). The latter were either “causal” (l.530), “compare-contrast” (l.532) or “evaluation” (l.532) essays. Similar view was reiterated by students also in PIQ (7.1.2.3) and 7.2.2.2.i.

According to T7, as literature essays were difficult to write she could “give the students some leeway” in not following the rules of organisation that strictly especially during timed examination situations, but this “flexibility” will not be allowed in case of language essays because ample time is given for the language essay and it’s easier to structure (T7 ll. 89-99).

The use of literary terms and literary jargon, teachers agreed (T2fu, T7 l.157-174, T8) made literature essays stylistically and linguistically different and more difficult than language essays. This reference to literary jargon was also made by T8 and T2fu. However, T8 (l.137-149) made it clear that although she would ideally like students of literature to use terms like ‘oxymoron’ or ‘paradoxes’ or find specialised terms like ‘diaspora’ or ‘aporia’ in more sophisticated writing, the reality, from experience, is that in the first year students’ linguistic proficiency is so low that teachers’ expectation level is also low. She further added:

It’s not something we are really going to be...looking for, as long as they can express the basic opinion in a reasonably organized form and show that they have read and ...have some understanding of the text that they are discussing. In the context of our country, the students’ linguistic proficiency with which they enter the department I would be very content with that in the first year. ... of course they do improve as they go on and teachers’ expectations do rise as well. Frankly teachers’ expectations of standard in the first year are low, from experience (T8 ll. 154-165)

(iii) Teachers' self criticism, inabilities and desires

Teachers not only pointed out what lacked within students' writing but also criticised their own teaching and acknowledged not having done enough to help students and this was something I had not anticipated asking but it emerged that they sincerely spoke about it.

Perhaps in the way in the nature of our question, kind of question we ask them . . . uh . . . is where the problems are and how do they start writing a literary essay? Something that they've never done before.... Are we gradually ... bringing them to a level where they can actually produce.... Say for instance if they were to write... an Introduction, just concentrate on some 10-12 questions/topics can be given and think of good introduction to write and you can just simply work on the Introduction. I think this is where I feel guilty as a teacher, we really haven't given them the tools. Suddenly they come to the university and never having written any literary essay before in their life... you produce a literary essay. We haven't so much even given them a model essay, not even told them what a literary essay should contain and suddenly expect them to write. It's unfair. (T3 ll. 193-215)

Similarly, a large section of T6's interview consisted of what she did in class and what she would prefer doing if given chances and this was something I did not think of asking. She introduced creative tasks in her teaching of literary texts and bringing in co-curricular activities like making students see related films and plays and insisted on encouraging students to be creative but pointed out how it was almost impossible in large classrooms and in the first year. She also regretted that students' writing never reflected these cross referencing as they were intimidated from taking risks and doing something out of the norm (T6 ll.618-624). More on this is in section 8.2.2.5.iv.

8.2.2.2 Opinions about structure

This section begins with discussions on teacher opinions about structure followed by specific opinions of what they expected from students, and what students did in particular when they structured the Introduction, Body and Conclusion.

English language and literature essays are described together as most of the teachers discussed them together.

(i) The importance of the role of structure in both literature and language essays

Most of the teachers perceived that structure was important for both language and literature essays (T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T7, T8) and they also believed that students came to the university being unaware of the specifics of what should be in the Introduction, Body and Conclusion, because of the fact that they were formally and systematically never taught how to structure an essay in schools and colleges (T3 ll.66-73), and only had “some vague idea” (T1 l.190, T2fu) or knew tacitly (T3 l.66) that an essay possessed a typical three-part structure. The concept of Introduction, Body and Conclusion was familiar to students but students were unaware of how the paragraphs were structured and linked with one another (T1 ll.269-275).

On the same issue T7 reported, 90% of the students had no knowledge of what the topic sentence is or about the writing rules; they were introduced to these for the first time in the First year at the university (ll.571-573). According to T4, structuring and organising essays was students’ “worst nightmare” (l.292) because they had “lots of ideas” (l.293)

which they could talk about during tutorials but could not write them in their examinations (ll.292-307). One reason for disorganised writing she thought was “time constraints” (T4 ll.330-331). T3 pointed out that students unconsciously or tacitly became aware of the structure and organisation by listening to lectures, or communicating in class or through reading (T3 ll.66-86).

T2 (ll. 310-314), T3 (ll.570-574) and T4 (ll.26-29), T5 (ll.388-393) reported that structure and organisation of the language and literature essays was not only important but was also similar, in the sense that they both needed similar criteria of having an Introduction, thesis statement, developing the topic in the Body with supporting details, have unified, coherent ideas and then have a conclusion. T5’s (ll.44-46) perception was that at the university teachers were not concerned about “grammar or word choice or sentence structure”, rather on the “structure of the essay”.

Interestingly, most of these teachers (T1fu; T2fu and l.333; T3 ll.257-259; T4 ll.26-47; T8 ll.59-72) felt that the one area where the two types of essays differed was that literature essays depended on other source texts for its content matter and how the text was being incorporated in the essays (8.2.2.1.ii). Because literature essays depend on other texts teachers could not be “too rigid” (T3 l.458) about structure, whereas for language essays writing using correct structure is of paramount importance. T3 also opined, if she were to mark literature essays she would not be “penalising” (l.502) and would give students “sort of leeway” (l.467) about how students structured as long as they kept to the focus (l.466), wrote with “clarity” (l.459) and “cohesion” (l.459),

sentences were not “disjointed” (l.460) and ideas were not “jumping from one thing to another” (l.460-461), but with language essays she would “immediately look at structure and organisation of the essay and be very critical there” (l.469-471).

T2fu commented that in timed exam situations she looked for structure and language errors more strictly in a language essay compared to a literature one. In the latter, however, she emphasised that with First year scripts she checked whether the students had read and understood the text or not.

(ii) Past way of teaching responsible for students' lack of awareness of structure

Surprisingly, all the teachers interviewed, in one form or the other, laid the responsibility on the past way of teaching for students' lack of ability to structure an essay. I discuss this in more detail in 8.2.2.5.i. and 8.2.2.5.ii. T5 noted that when students were taught writing of paragraphs and essays at school they were never introduced with the structure of an essay which led them to memorise essays from essay books. She made that clear in the following excerpt:

The case is always like this, the teacher comes to the class, writes the topic on the board and asks the students to write on it without giving any kind of hint or without discussing what an essay is, what should be the structure, what is a topic sentence, what is a thesis statement and what is a controlling idea. So students' common idea about the essay is that it is a long piece of writing on a given topic. So that's why they are not competent. They can write pages after pages but there is no unity, or no coherence or the ideas are not related with one another or there is no thesis statement or the topic sentences are not properly developed because the problem lies in their school where they were introduced with writing essays which was not explained to them properly. (T5 ll. 258-273)

The same problem was reiterated by T7 (ll.558-567). She presumed that most of the students at schools and colleges “by hearted” (l.563) around 15-20 paragraphs and essays each written by someone else which they reproduced in the exams. There was no need for the students to know of the writing rules since they were not writing “on their own” (l. 567).

(iii) Structure and correct language important in language essays whereas content more important in literature essays

In general, teachers opined that structure and organisation were important for both literature and language essays, as reiterated by students (7.2.2.4.i). Like the Pilot interview teacher (8.1), most of the teachers (T1, T2fu, T3, T4, T6fu, T7, T8) prioritised structure, organisation, coherence and correct language over content in the language essays, and “content rather than correctness of the language” (T6 ll.45-46) in literature essays.

As content was considered more important in a literature essay, teachers (T2 ll. 318-33; T3 ll.258-259; T6 ll.45-46, 104-134; T7 ll.14-16, 25-29; T8 ll.59-72, 105-119) perceived reading and understanding the text as vital required stages that students needed to undertake before they could write a good literature essay, a point also made by students in 7.2.2.2.i. Without an indepth, critical and analytical understanding of the text, no matter how proficient students were in the language the essays would never be considered well written.

(iv) An alternative view

One teacher (T8 ll.116-119), however, felt that both structure and content were equally important for literature. When she evaluated students' language essays, she checked them entirely on structure, style and vocabulary (ll.57- 61), in her words, "more the language aspects" (ll.120-121).

She also commented on something no one else did and this was a new category that emerged. She agreed that writing literature essays was a complex process but with regards to teaching the structure of essays, T8 (ll.183-190) reported that it was easier to teach how to write literature essays than the language ones. What she said was very interesting and made a very strong case. In her view, the literature essays were more "controlled" (l.202); they were "rarely creative" (l.209) pieces and the stylistic features of the "critical essays on texts" (l.215) were easier to teach than the language essays. The stylistic features of the critical essays tended to be "uniform" (l.184) with "a kind of mechanical structure" (l.186) where an Introduction has "certain features" (l.188). These features she elaborated as being:

the first paragraph has opening comments, and then it has a thesis sentence or a theme sentence ...where ...you are actually putting forward the main view you are going to develop in the rest of the essay and, some essays ideally also have some kind of sign posting, what you call a plan of development of how the rest of the essay will deal with the issues that you have picked up in the Introduction. ...that is quite common, ...in fact, it's not only common to literature essays, it's common to critical essay writing across disciplines really. And that can be taught. (T8 ll. 220-232)

However, she also stated that unfortunately what happened in the First year was that students did not get enough practice and input in essay writing because it is introduced as a small component of a larger course towards the end of the year and so students were incompetent in getting the control over the structure (T8 ll.194-200). The language essays on the other hand, were difficult to teach because they tended “to be more varied in format” (l.178). They can be personal writing, or narrative which can take the form of story writing and that would be very different structurally from a discursive essay (T8 ll. 177-183).

8.2.2.3 Opinions about structuring the three parts of essay

As all teachers felt that students had some idea of structuring, with regards to their knowledge of an essay being a long piece of writing with an Introduction, Body and Conclusion, I felt it necessary to get more insight into what teachers found students were doing in the separate parts, what according to them were the essential features of the three parts.

8.2.2.3.1 The ‘Introduction’

(i) Difficulty in constructing thesis statement

Like students (7.2.2.4.1.i), teachers also opined that students had major problems focusing their central idea. Teachers responded that the Introduction is where one gives the “thesis sentence” (T4 l.231; T8 l.221) or the “thesis statement” (T5 l.32) or

“controlling idea” (T5 l.22) or the “central idea” (T2 l.394) or the “theme sentence” (T8 ll.221-222) followed by a plan of development (T1 ll.198-199; T8 ll.225-228).

According to T5, students faced most problems writing the Introduction and Conclusion (l.401). She identified students’ incompetence in introducing the topic (ll.402-406) and giving a proper thesis statement which according to her should be at the end of the introductory paragraph (ll.131-132). Sometimes when they did have one at the end of the Introduction paragraph it was not properly developed in the Body of the essay (T5 ll.131-138). Likewise, T1 mentioned that 90% of the students or even more were unable to write complex Introductions (ll.214-217). However, T1 contradicted T5’s opinion that if the first sentence in the Introductory paragraph was not the thesis statement students confused themselves (ll. 217-220).

An interesting view was revealed by T2. She pointed out that she often found the “central idea” totally absent in the Introduction, but found that it might suddenly appear in the Body (T2 ll. 394-396). T2fu also opined that since literature essays are text-based the Introductions should have specific beginnings, whereas the non-literary essays can begin with different perspectives. T1fu added that with literature essays, the thesis statement must appeal to both the readers’ “intuitive and rational faculties” and persuade them to think and reflect.

(ii) Difference of opinions about 'Plan of Development'

With regards to plan of development, PD, T1 insisted it as an obligatory element without which students will not “have an idea of what they’ll have to do” (ll.198-205 and T1fu). This was an interesting perception as this teacher certainly believed that PD was more a need of the student to remain focused than for the reader. T8 (ll.225-227) commented that PDs are ideal forms of sign posting in the essays about the issues that will be discussed in the rest of the essay. A couple of teachers felt that it was not mandatory but would be good if the student was able to give one as it helps the reader (T4fu) and that it is essential for longer essays (T5fu).

(iii) Beginning 'Introductions' with excessive broad generalisations

Concerning the Introduction, T6 pointed out that students certainly know that they should begin the essay with an Introduction. But in spite of being told that Introductions should answer the question, students begin “by giving history” (l.728). The following excerpt expresses her view:

...most of our students begin introductions by giving history,...they have done it all the time. They can not go straight ...to answering the question... this is a notion that they come with, that there has to be an introduction. So they give a very general introduction, instead of giving an introduction which is geared to the particular question. (T6 ll. 727-737)

T4 elaborated on this issue with reference to literature essays, that firstly because teachers normally began teaching a literary text by introducing the life of the writers, students consequently felt that it was appropriate to start answering the question with the

life of the author. This was an interesting and surprising response. Secondly, she thought that the low quality notebooks that students read have set answers that begin mostly with the authors. This style was more evident in literature LGE Introductions (6.6.1.1). Finally, T4 added that this style was also practised in L1 essay writing (More discussion in section 8.2.2.5.ii). T4fu while commenting on two students' essay Introductions pointed that although they were both well written essays, one was discursive with good ideas while the other was more structured, tighter with the organisation, and hence, the arguments of the latter was easier to follow than the former.

8.2.2.3.2 The 'Body'

(i) Development of Thesis Statement and Supporting Details easier to do in language essays than literature essays

Teachers felt that the Body of an essay, whether language or literature, should develop with supporting details of the ideas introduced in the Introduction. In terms of the development of ideas and arguments in the Body of a language essay, T5 and T1fu perceived that students did not face much difficulty as the language essay topics were not difficult. They were related to "recent happenings or contemporary issues" (T5 11.186-191) or topics "directly related with the students" (T5 1.317) where students had freedom to write, give their opinions, agree or disagree and develop the topics.

The Body of the literature essay, on the other hand, needed to be developed in a more complex way because it was more analytical (11.150-153), was required to "cite critics"

(l.165), “refer to different critics and texts” (ll.165-166) which students were not competent in doing, opined T5 and T7fu. T1fu observed, students did not know how to merge arguments with illustration and could not present that.

On the issue of the reiteration of the thesis statement T1fu commented that he did not recommend it for students who lacked originality and creative control over their writing. T7 fu insisted that students often forgot to reiterate the central idea in the topic sentences of the Body paragraphs in both language and literature essays. When asked to comment on the content of the essays in the Body, T7fu informed that for the language essays she looked for relevant materials that have a direct bearing on the development of the central idea whereas for a literature essay content should not only be relevant but also be analytical with appropriate supporting details and technical terminologies which are often lacking.

(ii) *Giving chronological narration of story/list of items*

Teachers reported that students in general tried to provide narrations which lacked any form of analysis. T5 (ll.34-39; 295-296) on language essays commented students simply gave “a list of items” without developing them or providing any supporting detail, nor “think through” (l.68) and as a result the idea was not fully developed.

According to T4, the Body was the “worst part” (l.264) as students “always will give you the story” (ll.264-265). Elaborating on the issue she informed me:

Details of the story or a summary... they start by saying "In the beginning we see...." Or "At first" ... and they'll give you the story & they think that the story itself is explanatory ... so the examiner will understand from the story what ... is necessary ... that's one of the styles we try very hard for the students to unlearn (T4 ll. 269-280)

She illustrated the point raised by her by referring to two different scripts²² from her tutorial groups that she had graded which I analysed:

...you see that's the difference between this paper and this paper, the one who got 'Good' because the student who got good, she's not giving a chronological narration which most of the students do. (T4 ll. 280-283)

This idea is reiterated by T8. When checking scripts of the First year, in most of the scripts she found the Body having a "crude movement into chronological narration of the story" with "one or two comments" (T8 ll. 412-414). She added that one could almost "predict" (l.419) the subject matter of the essay. The reason for this was students' use of the same *bazaar* notes or note books.

A lot of these ideas that teachers expressed I observed were happening in the essays during the text analysis stage. For instance, it was found that students began the Body in both literature HGE and LGE with transitional frame markers using exophoric references (6.5.2, 6.6.2 and 6.6.4). Moreover, T8's opinions about Body paragraphs beginning with chronological narration was in fact what literature LGE were exactly doing (6.6.2, 6.7.3.1).

²² Due to lack of space all the essays analysed cannot be placed in the Appendices. However, if required these data can be made available to the examiners.

(iii) Lack of smooth transitions

T1 recommended that students should realise that the 'Body' is a "collection of paragraphs" (l.267) that each paragraph should have one idea or point developed by evidence and examples. He also pointed out, like T2, that students did not know how to organise, link and use transitions between paragraphs (T1 ll.265-275) nor present the points in order of priority in literature essays (T2 ll.402-420). T2 noticed:

...they start talking about one idea in one paragraph and then all on a sudden they jump to another idea without showing, making any connection between the two. (T2 ll. 441-445)

T7 fu also identified the use of the transitions as a necessary element. When reading essays she often noticed whether the change of ideas was being done smoothly or abruptly.

8.2.2.3.3 The 'Conclusion'

(i) Essays with no Conclusions

Interestingly enough, I noticed that out of my nine main interviews done the first time, only three interviews (T2, T4 and T6) had discussions on Conclusions. All the detailed discussions on conclusions were, thus, carried out in the follow-ups.

According to T7fu, she expected students to reiterate the main points again to bring the central idea to a close in both literature and language essays but in reality she found that many students do not write conclusions, and even if they did they left them incomplete

and did not bring the central idea to a gradual close or had abrupt endings which she felt was mainly due to time constraints. T2fu, T1fu observed that sometimes the answers would come to a sudden close with no conclusion. This was more clearly visible in literature LGE, but some of HGE were also seen to have this tendency (6.6.3, 6.5.3).

(ii) Summarising and commenting on what has been written

T5 opined that students had most problems structuring the Introduction and Conclusion, however, there was no discussion on Conclusions in the main interview with T5. Likewise, T6 also agreed that students had “great problems” (l.746) with the Conclusion, because they were unaware of the fact that in a conclusion it is necessary to comment on what preceded instead of simply giving a “summary of what they’ve said before” (T6 ll. 746-752). Students wrote in such a way because this was how they were taught to write conclusions of essays in both L1 and L2 at schools. Both T2 and T4 had similar views.

...what they usually do is they sum up what they have written. And most of our students lack any kind of giving their opinion, in case of literature essays. ... there is nothing new. Just what they have memorised and what they have written they just sum it up. So it's a kind of repetition. (T2 ll. 458-464)

T1fu opined that language conclusions were easier to draw, because they gave their personal opinions.

(iii) Using transition frame markers to indicate conclusions

“Thus it is like this” or “That is why we are saying this” (ll.278-279) are the catch phrases used by students, stated T4. She felt that this was a style influenced by students’ habit of chronological narration that teachers try very hard for students to “unlearn” (ll.279-283). Similarly, T2 humorously referred to students’ use of catch phrases like “In fine” (l.451) when the issue of how students wrote conclusions was raised by me. By using these frame markers students try to make a transition to the Conclusion section of their essay.

This is a reiteration of what I found particularly in the literature HGE and LGE Conclusions (6.5.3.1 and 6.6.3).

(iv) Open conclusions

T4fu distinguished between open conclusions and summarising conclusions. Open conclusions were conclusions where the writer touched upon a new line of thought for the reader. They were considered by T4 to be a sign of maturity and appropriate for advanced level writers when they are more in control with their writing and particularly suitable for literature essays because they tend to have open ended interpretations (T4 fu).

8.2.2.4 Differences between English language and literature essay topics

Teachers were asked mainly about two aspects of topics—content of the topics and wordings and instructional verbs used in the topics or questions. The first was related to

the subject matter of topics and whether they were appropriate to their level of study.

The second was concerned with whether students paid attention to the rubrics.

8.2.2.4.1 Content of topics

Responses to this category were given in terms of language and literature topics.

However, all teachers did not respond by making the distinctions clear.

(i) Topics should progress from easy to difficult

T2fu, like T5, suggested that topics should be given gradually from easier to difficult and for both language and literature writing she insisted that students should be made to write five types of essays in the following order of progression from easier to difficult—descriptive, narrative, compare-contrast, cause and effect and argumentative. In her language classes, she tried following that order. However, on reflecting she reported that she did not practise this with literature essays and realised that this could be a very useful way of developing students' literature writing efficiency. Students could relate the language essays written in the language classes with the literature essays written during the tutorials²³ easily if this practice was followed. She felt that in the tutorials, teachers never thought of setting questions according to the level of difficulty. What was done was that students were made to write very critical and analytical essays from their first tutorial not worrying about whether students were adept at handling such topics (T2fu).

²³ Tutorials are small group sessions where students are made to write timed essays, which could be both language or literature depending on what the teacher wants to do

Like T8 (8.2.2.2.iv), T6 (11.556-558) also reported that by the time students started working on argumentative topics and write essays on them, it was already towards the end of the year and they hardly get time to practise writing them.

(ii) 'Evaluate' and 'Position-Reason' type topics to be practised more to fulfil academic needs at university

On showing the different types of essays, 'Compare-Contrast', 'Evaluate', 'Position-Reason' and 'Describe' from literature and 'Description', 'Recount' 'Explanation' and 'Position-Reason' from language group, teachers were asked which type of essays should students be practising more. Teachers (T1, T7, T7fu, T2, T3) observed that 'Evaluate' and 'Position-Reason' were more "productive" (T1fu) because these topics demanded more maturity from the writers, would increase students' critical ability and boost their confidence to present their opinions (T7, T7fu, T2). These essay types bring the reader's active participation with the text (T7 11.461-468), they help students to "think" (T2 1.118), be "critical" (T2 1.225), and encourage students to reflect and be argumentative and help write literature essays (T7fu), an idea also reiterated by students (7.2.2.3.ii). Students had written 'Descriptive' essays in schools and colleges (T7 11.497-510) and they were easily available in *bazaar* notebooks (T2 11.222-224), therefore, students had no problems with them. On the contrary, argumentative topics were difficult to write because they lacked confidence in taking a position (T2 11.225-227, 491-498) and were worried that the examiner might disagree with them and give them lower marks (T7 11.507-510; T2 11. 211-213).

After going through the list of language topics that I compiled from the English Language Course examination papers, T4 noted that almost all the topics were descriptive, as agreed by T8, and pointed out that what was “missing” (l.531) from the list were the ‘causal questions’ ‘compare-contrast’ and ‘Evaluate’ type questions. She stated that the ‘Evaluate’ type of essays were very “critical” (l.533) and students were required to write those for the literature courses (ll.530-535). T4 also commented that when teachers set these language topics they presume that students will be able to write better if they were given topics where they were personally involved (ll.561-564). As a result, the language essays were “experiential” (l.568) and “personal” (l.569). This practice she identified as being “meaningless” (l.673) because at the university students needed English for academic purposes and more practice in argumentative writing (more in 8.2.2.6.iii). T8 also commented that the language topics were “very general” (l.291) and citing some examples like, ‘Describe the problems in the library in Dhaka University’ or ‘A film students have enjoyed most’ observed that such topics did not meet the “specialised needs” (l.317) of the English department students (ll.289-329). These types of topics, she felt, lacked the skills needed for academic writing in the English department as they were not concerned with the research element required to produce essays at the university (T8 ll.48-56).

(iii) An alternative view

Although T7 on one hand, like all teachers, agreed that the language topics were very “subjective” (l.347) and “personal” (l.347), on the other hand, she felt that they were also helping students learn to “give voices to their opinions” (l.348) and also bring about

an “identity of their own” (l.358), as reiterated by some students in 7.2.2.3.ii. She added that even by writing these personal essays students could write literature essays because in the latter there was always the need to voice one’s own opinion about what the poets or the writers of the text expressed. These faculties, she felt, could be enhanced by these language topics. This is expressed in the following extract:

Ok, yes there is a relation because in the language essay, if this student is going to write about the problem he or she faces in the university, ... he is going to give his voice to his opinion, what he or she feels and he is going to express that ... And when he writes about Adrienne Rich and Ted Hughes’ animal imagery- he has of course done some reading in order to attempt this question but then... the question states that this person is expected to compare and contrast. So ... when he is expected to compare and contrast, his opinion of course come in, because... he has read about the animal imagery of Rich and also Ted Hughes, ... the onus is on him to bring them together or club them together according to his opinion of what things are similar and what things are dissimilar. In most of the cases yes when he has done his reading, that work is done. But then there is still room for his own idea, his own opinion of the poets. (T7 ll.372-391)

This teacher’s response reiterated the opinions of a few students in the student interviews (7.2.2.3.ii). However, on further probing T7 agreed that if we were really trying to help our students write better literature essays, then we should include more “argumentative and reflective” (l. 492) topics in the language course (8.2.2.4.1.ii).

(iv) Avoiding stock questions

Teachers (T1, T3, T4, T6) acknowledged that essay topics are often repeated and this should be avoided if we want our students to write on their own. T1 used the term “stock questions” (T1 l.62) to refer to the predictable topics. Students invariably

memorise these by getting hold of prepared notes (T1 ll.58-64, T3 ll.639-652) and as a result students faced problems when they were not given stock questions.

Commenting on the topics, T4 said:

I don't think much of them. We tend to repeat our topics... "Your First Day at the University," "Reasons for Studying English Literature," "Terrorism," "Student Politics," "Load Shedding," "My University Campus." ... then we give choice... out of four you are bound to find something. You'll have read the essay at home or may be you'll have memorised that you have already written on or is familiar to you, so we are not encouraging them to think, we are not challenging them, they just don't think and we accept essays where students are just regulating from various sources. (T3 ll. 639-655)

T6 informed that we set the typical "critically appreciate a piece of writing" (l.135) type of questions that always come in examinations (T6 ll.132-144), and as a result students do not have problems. They anticipate the questions and prepare the answers. Like T1, she also noticed that if question wordings were changed students faced severe problems, because they were not used to thinking through the questions (T6 ll. 407-411).

8.2.2.4.2 Rubrics of the topics

(i) Students do not heed the instructions

Although teachers (T1, T2, T3, T4, T7) opined that instructional verbs or question wordings were important in writing essays, all of them (T1-T8) responded that students

were not heedful of question wordings. Explaining why question wordings were important, T5, like T7 (ll.641-648), informed that students should follow the instructional verbs in order to “write well-structured essays” (T5 ll. 364-366), an idea echoed by T2. However, she added that unfortunately our students did not do that. A common problem with students’ writing, even with mature students, is that their essays reveal the fact that they did not read the question (T5 ll. 371- 377). T7 regretted that students did not “heed these instructions” (l.643) and only looked at the “main topic” (l.644) and started writing which lacked focus. T6 and T1’s opinions about students’ predictions of “stock questions” which lead them to memorise essays was also a reason for not paying attention to the instructions (8.2.2.4.1.iii).

(ii) Teachers’ responsibility to make students recognise the importance of rubrics

Discussing the questions and “key words” (l.135) in the questions with the students was essential, thought T2, T3, T4, T7, T8 which would certainly improve the quality of their work. Students would then tend to keep to the topic (T3 ll.132-148), an idea also revealed by T4 (512-517). A few teachers had specific suggestions as to what could be done to improve students’ understanding of the essay topics. T2 (ll.31-33) informed that only a few good students paid attention to the instructional verbs or question wordings, and agreed that understanding these words was very important to identify what type of essays, argumentative or descriptive, the students were going to write. The language classes, thought T2, could make students aware of the differences in the instructional

verbs, like teaching students what to do when they had to Compare and Contrast, which vocabularies needed to be used and so on (T2 ll. 110-121).

T4 informed that 90% of the students did not look at the instructional verbs and she did not blame the students for not doing so because she felt that in the First year it was the teachers' responsibility to make students notice the differences in the instructional verbs (ll.394-414). When asked what teachers did when students did not answer the question, she replied:

we are very liberal and we don't mind when we had asked them to analyse something they end up describing it. We are very happy that they have written something (laughs) so we give them marks (T4 ll. 399-402)

Similarly, T1 also opined that students have this idea that whatever they wrote they would get 45% marks (ll.69-73). This problem could be avoided if instead of one long question, it was "cut into pieces" and smaller questions with different instructions were given (T1 ll. 61-86).

Like T2 and T4, T8 also informed that in the First year students did not come to the department with the sophistication to "distinguish between comment, analyse, discuss" (ll.343-344) and these did not have much bearing on what they wrote. She added that students tended to "see them as synonyms for each other" (l.345). Although T8 was not very hopeful whether students' writing would at all improve even if teachers taught the instructional verbs, she nevertheless acknowledged that teaching them to "discern the

differences between these verbs” (l.358) should be “tried” (l.370) out to see whether that had any bearing on what they wrote in the essays.

8.2.2.5 Factors affecting student writing of English language and literature essays

As mentioned earlier, the responses in this category are very important in contributing contextual clues to the understanding of why students were unable to structure their essays appropriately.

(i) Past way of writing English essays

In almost all the interviews teachers complained that students were unable to write competently and academically at university level because of the way they were taught to write at school and college. Students faced major problems writing for literature since they never wrote them before (T3 ll.195-197).

Details of this have been stated in Section 8.2.2.2.ii and, therefore, will not be repeated here.

(ii) Past way of writing Bangla essays

Teachers interestingly drew connections between L2 and L1 writing of essays. They (T1 ll.486-530, T4 ll.195-203) felt that students had problems in writing English essays not only because English teachers in the past did not provide sufficient writing instructions

but also because the same process was with L1 essay writing. Unlike English, students do have Bengali literature in school and college curriculum but they are not taught the techniques that would be required for writing essays on literature. T1 opined:

...if one does a survey on the students of the English Department about what they were taught in the *Bangla* essay classes, what we'll find is that they were taught really nothing. They were only taught that in an essay there must be an Introduction, a body, a conclusion. They were made to read good essays. May be that was there, but they were never clearly shown the way of writing good essays and let alone literature essays.... Most of the students when they come to the department they have never heard of metaphor or simile in their life and they come here to study English literature. I would ask how many of them are really capable of analyzing *Bangla* literature? (T1 ll. 509-528)

When asked whether giving broad general Introductions was a practised style in L1 essay writing, T4 not only agreed but also added that it was a very acceptable style with L1 essays at the university level too. While moderating Bangla Literature question papers²⁴, she noticed that most of the questions were based on the authors rather than on the texts.

(iii) Reproduction of memorised texts

Interestingly enough like the student interviews (7.2.2.1.iv), teachers too spoke extensively about memorisation although I had not asked them on the issue. It was a natural outcome in the interviews as well as the Pre-interview questionnaire (PIQ). So this was a new topic that emerged out of the interviews. Almost all the teachers

²⁴ Students of the English department are required to take Bangla literature 1 and 2 papers in the 2nd and 3rd years as a part of the Integrated courses.

identified rote learning as a major factor hindering students' writing efficiency. T2 and T5 claimed that students memorised answers because that is how they were encouraged to write at school and college. T2 opined that because students did not write enough and what so ever little they wrote depended on memorization, it turned into a "habit" (l.165) with the students. They were "losing their creativity" (l.157) and "ability to write on their own" (ll.157-158). T2 even cited that her own daughter who now attended one of the best public schools in Dhaka city requested her to write the essays for her which she would rote learn for her exams in order to get good marks. Adding to that, she pointed out that in such circumstances no one could test students' real ability, whether what they were writing was the product of their own thinking (T2 ll. 174-188). The two factors that forced students to memorise answers were, according to T3, lack of "enough time" (l.734) to complete answers on their own and their over riding fear of marks. Elaborating the issue, she said:

...They are doing rote learning because they have no other choice. ... we do not give them enough time to think about these issues, do the necessary research, write several drafts if necessary, . . . I believe in process writing, ... I think that the first essay that they produce should not be marked. ... that mark thing creates a sort of a fear, the fact that you are going to be graded... and it's going to be counted in the final examination, they are under pressure. If that was not there, the psychological, the fear, the barrier was not there then they would be very much at ease, would be trying out things, would be very adventurous with the language (T3 ll. 731-748)

More on the time issue is discussed in 8.2.2.5.iv. Students did not take writing paragraphs and essays seriously because they were encouraged to memorise essays in the past from essay books or collect essays from seniors (T4 ll.244-247) and were never

introduced to the structure of an essay, and as a result they had no clear concept of thesis statement or how ideas needed to be developed and connected (T5 ll.254-273). A very elaborate illustration of the case was provided by T5 which has been discussed and quoted in 8.2.2.2.ii.

(iv) Writing under time constraints

A few teachers (T3, T4, T1fu, T2fu) observed time pressure as a cause for students' inability to write effectively as has already been hinted in the above section. T4 felt that students mostly made grammatical errors in their writing because they are under "time constraints" (ll.330-331).

they have the words... but they don't know how to organise it, ... Sometimes they make these mistakes due to time constraints, like ... when I ask them that why did you make this mistake, very simple is the number mistake - 'this boys', so when I show it to them that what will this be, they can immediately correct it..., they tell me oh it will be this. So they know but when they were writing it... the psychological factor, the tension, hurrying, writing within time constraint, I think which requires a kind of discipline within yourself, sometimes you can see that their thoughts are going faster than their writings, so they are dropping words, they are making like past tense, they are not using the 'ed' form, you can see that's because they are hurrying so much. (T4 ll. 327-345)

Like PIQ responses (7.1.2.5), T1fu informed that during examinations students want to write too much, to display everything they know. Students preferred to rote learn answers and regurgitate even if they were asked a different question, because they felt that if they wrote on their own they would make more mistakes and be penalised for that (T2fu). Another point raised by T2 and T3 (8.2.2.5.iii) was that the 3/4 hours

examination system forced students to memorise answers to be completed in time and as a result their writing did not improve. Similarly, T3 opined that the fear of marks discouraged students from taking risks (T3 ll. 775-789). As a result, students did not want to try out new things. As an example of this, T6 described a situation; when she was teaching *The Merchant of Venice* she compared the play with *The Charge of the Light Brigade*, discussed Jews, Nazis, World War II, showed students one related movie and asked them to watch more and compare different versions of the same movie and so on. However, she regretted that students did not bother mentioning anything of what they did in class while reading the play when they wrote their essays during the examination (ll.599-673). She mentioned:

... unfortunately our students are so scared of the exams that what we discussed in the class... only one student brought in the movie that she had seen. No one else dared to even deviate from the set answer that he or she had memorised. (T6 ll. 618-624)

T2 suggested that assignments would develop students' writing skills more because they will get more time and that will enable them to think and read critically the text and the other critics (ll.527-535)

(v) Lack of critical reading ability

Although this point was raised before in 8.2.2.1.ii, it is again mentioned here as teachers (T1 ll.171-177, T1fu T2fu, T6fu, T8 ll.60-67) identified students' inability to comprehend the texts they read as a major problem to their writing efficiency. T1fu felt that way because students had never been made to read anything challenging before.

The reading texts in *English for Today* (the English text used for classes X-XII) were way too easy and same was the case with the English language course book, *Advancing Language Skills* (T1 11.371-376 and T2fu). They observed that the reading passages provided in the language book were not at all challenging for English department students because the literary texts they read for their core courses were too difficult. With the language readings passages T1fu opined that possibly students were able to reach the “lexical” or “denotative” meaning of the literary language but it was almost impossible for them to understand the “connotative” meaning, due to which students’ essays in the First year were not “truly analytical”, which was echoed in PIQ (7.1.2.3). Students at this stage were unable to decipher the presence of “multiple meanings”, “ambiguity” and “ambivalence” in literary texts. On getting confused, students land up giving “impressionistic and unconscious” analyses of what they read.

T6fu like T3fu opined that students did not read but reading helps students’ understanding of texts which is a necessary stage for good writing. Stressing the importance of reading, T3fu commented that “reading critically”, “thinking critically” and “thinking constantly” were essential steps to the creation of a good text which were not undertaken by students.

8.2.2.6 Gaps between English language class writing and literature essay writing

There were mixed opinions from teachers about the language course run by the English department. Teachers (T2, T3, T6, T7) felt that the language course did help students in

some ways, but lacked to take appropriate measures in improving students' efficiency in writing essays for the literature courses.

Students failed to make connections between English language essay writing and literature essay writing, T1fu opined. The reason he gave was that teachers designing the literature courses, based on the canons, mainly belonged to the old school. There was a lack of practical knowledge and indepth engagement on the part of the teachers to understand the background of the First year students.

T4 categorically pointed out that "one of the gaps" (l.41) in the language classes was that it did not teach the students how to incorporate the text and cite evidence. In her opinion, "content organisation" and linking the ideas within the paragraphs was something students had problems with:

I think so one of the gaps is incorporating the text, that is what is not taught in language essay classes, how you give proofs, ... in literature, you always, when you are giving a point, the evidence has to be given from the text... That is not applicable in a language essay and that is why I think they have difficulties that I have seen with students.... (T4 ll.41-47)

Another main gap T4, T2fu, T3, T7fu identified was related to the kind of topics that were given in the English language exams and language classes. The topics were being repeated from secondary school writing which contradicted with what teachers at the university tried to teach, that is, academic writing rich in analytical, critical and cognitive thinking (T4 ll. 667-690).

We are trying to teach them another kind of writing, we are trying to teach them academic writing, right? Because they are going to need English for academic purposes and you are coming back with those age old descriptive topics, meaningless... and which are there in the essay books, don't forget that also...In critical thinking cognition is absolutely, that's the number one priority...Because without cognitive thinking, you don't do anything academic... And I think that's where the difference between a very bright student and a not so bright student lies. (T4 ll. 667-692)

Students do not have enough practice in writing analytical essays in either language or literature courses and, hence, most students lack the “confidence” in trying to do analytical writing and try to play safe by only describing situations even in literature essays. Moreover, language essays are based on titles only which allow students to write in whichever perspective they feel comfortable in (T1 ll.37-39, T3fu), whereas literature topics come with specific questions that demand students to write with focus.

Among the positive aspects of the Language course, T2fu reported, students gained the knowledge about the structure of an essay from the language classes which they applied while writing a literature essay. For instance, when students wrote the Introduction to literature essays they knew there were different ways of introducing. She insisted that the language classes helped students structure their essays well, but they did not teach how to present the textual content within that structure. In addition to that she observed that the language classes did improve students' basic general language skills but did not develop the literary skills, which are the specific needs of students studying English literature. She informed that students hardly practised essay writing. Writing a few paragraphs and doing comprehension work in class, with some home tasks given, was

not serving the purpose of the specific academic writing skills needed by the English department students.

8.3 Discussion

From the teacher interview responses the major issues identified were:

8.3.1 English literature essay writing more challenging than English language essays

All the teachers unanimously agreed that writing literature essays was a more complex process than language essays and students found it formidable. The language essays simply focused on the thesis statement followed by some facts and figures and correct language, whereas literature essay writing involved presenting not just facts and figures but also handling an issue with more probe and intense thinking which was cognitively more demanding and required the students to go beyond the basics. So, students encountered more steps even before embarking on writing. Students had to read, analyse and understand the source text content along with reading, understanding and forming an opinion about other readings on the source text. Students found this extremely difficult to do. Hence, the language essay writing belonged to the world of general knowledge or personal experience and the literature essays belonged to the writing with source text/s, the content of which student-writers were expected to display knowledge on, and the two were products of ‘completely different worlds’ as observed by Leki and Carson (1997). Because the language essays are on topics that are personal, cultural,

experiential and general opinion (current affairs), students did not have to undertake any research or use materials from other sources, which are essential steps for writing a literature essay. As a consequence, students are unable to fulfil the discipline specific writing requirements.

In Cummins' (1979) terms, the language essay writing was beneficial in developing basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) needed in day to day social situations as against cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) needed for academic learning. The language essay topics were also very predictable and students could easily prepare them in advance and memorise them to be regurgitated in the examination halls. When students tried memorising essays for literature they landed up writing on something different from the topic asked. Teachers resented the fact that students memorised irrelevant content neither worrying about what content they were memorising nor thinking about what they were writing. There is this big sense of dissatisfaction because of the mismatch between what is asked and what they produce by rote learning. If students were lucky they produced the relevant memorised text to the question.

Teachers have distinguished between writing of language and literature essays on the basis of lower order skills and higher order skills. Language essays possessed more of description, and it did not matter so much if students did not apply the higher order skills that much. In contrast, the literature essays might have some initial description of context but the main focus in the essays were on how students are able to handle the

topic using more critical or analytical approaches (McMillan and Weyers 2007). For this reason, the language essays are seen to have more of Recount or chronological structural approaches or common denominator approaches on one hand. On the other hand, the literature essays possess more of analytical, thematic and comparative-contrastive structural approaches where students are required to look at the text/issues critically, decode the text, engage in the text completely and not only be prepared to challenge the text wherever possible but also be cooperative readers.

8.3.2 Importance of structure for both English language and literature essays

Structure was thought to be vital for both literature and language essays but students hardly had any knowledge of structuring essays. However, teachers had different opinions regarding how they would look at it in the two contexts. It was opined that since literature essay writing involved complex processes and had complex content, not usually associated with language essay writing, it was more difficult to structure the literature essays. Hence, structuring the language essays was simpler as the content was simple and personal. Teachers felt that it was possible to structure the language essays tightly and that they would be very critical of marking a language essay in terms of structural and linguistic accuracy. However, they would be more liberal with students if they did not follow the rules of organisation that strictly in a literature essay during the timed examination situations, because in literature essays teachers were more concerned with the content, whether students understood their texts and were able to present their ideas.

Teachers found students having problems structuring all the parts, Introduction, Body and Conclusion. Most often students instead of introducing the topic would give a broad general introduction with excessive background information that was out of proportion with the rest of the essay. Some teachers felt that this presentation of a broad general Introduction was the result of inappropriate genre transfer from L1 literature writing to L2 literature writing. Students were also found to have major problems focussing on the thesis statement and developing that with appropriate illustration and arguments was something students had difficulty doing. Instead, essays tended to have a chronological narration of the story and this was more so because of the experiential kind of topics which students were used to writing in the past and also now for their language course. Another point teachers raised was that because students were not penalised for not answering their question students continue doing it. With conclusions students had difficulty in commenting on what they argued for in the essay, rather they summarised or presented a one or two line précis of their whole essay particularly in the literature essays.

One teacher, T3fu, even suggested that because our students are under a lot of pressure during timed examination conditions, they needed to be trained all the more to structure their essays properly.

8.3.3 Providing instructions on question wordings and need for argumentative/ analytical topics

All the teachers commented that language essay topics were very different from the literature ones because the latter were more “analytical”. Practising argumentative and analytical writing more than factual ones would benefit students more. The words that were most commonly used by the teachers in connection with the discussion of literature topics were ‘analyse’, ‘analytical’ and ‘critical’.

Teachers realised that it was our responsibility to make students aware of the instructional verbs and directives and impart knowledge of the differences in the question wordings that they needed before they began writing their essays. This would enable them to focus their essays and discourage them from rote learning.

8.3.4 Are students able to make connections between the language essay writing and the literature essay writing?

Students were certainly not able to draw connections between the language and literature course writing because students practised very different kinds of writing for the two courses. Apart from writing experiential and general knowledge topics, students should be made to write Content-based essays, that is, essays with content that would be relevant for their mainstream subject, English literature. All the teachers recommended that more challenging tasks should be given to students in the language class to make their classes and academic studies in the English department more meaningful. Apart

from practising more essays that required them to argue, analyse and critically look at issues, they also suggested that students should be taught how to write and structure literature essays in their language classes. Proper attention was also not given to academic writing, writing that was required to fulfil the specialised needs of the students. One way to develop that was to upgrade the reading texts used in the language classes.

8.4 Conclusion

This chapter provided the expert community members' opinions. They act as the gatekeepers who decide on the acceptability of the genre and hence it was important to find out what they thought of students' essay writing. This chapter ended with a discussion of the major issues raised from their responses and helped in answering Research Questions 3 and 5. Having gained both textual and contextual information from the last five chapters, the study now moves forward for a final integrated discussion of the findings in Chapter 9.

CHAPTER 9: INTEGRATED DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

9.0 Introduction

In this final chapter, I aim at an integrated discussion of my findings to provide insights gained from textual and contextual analyses of Bangladeshi First Year university students' writing of English language and literature essays. The first section (9.1) briefly summarises the Research Questions. The second section (9.2) pulls together the different data findings and discusses the significance and implication of all that has been found. Then the third section (9.3) provides a discussion of what gap the study has identified and how that can be minimised. A summary of the major contributions of this study is provided in the fourth section (9.4), followed by the fifth section (9.5) where I provide a summary of the recommendations for pedagogical development of the work. The limitations are presented in the sixth section (9.6). The seventh section (9.7) provides ideas for further research, followed by the final conclusion to the thesis (9.8).

9.1 Answering the research questions

RQ1: What types of topics/questions, in terms of fields and functions are set for the general English language essays and English literature essays?

The English language essay topics, which came mainly in the form of titles, belonged predominantly to the 'Place' and 'People' fields, in conjunction with different issues in Bangladesh, and that require students to apply prior knowledge, like festivals/events, problem aspects and so on (for more details see 4.2.1.1, 4.3.2). The English literature topics, on the other hand, came in the form of detailed questions, were mainly from 'Characterisation' and 'Themes' fields, and required students to do either single or comparative character analysis and write essays with sub-themes of 'internal human' and 'social human' (4.2.2.1, 4.3.2).

RQ2) How are the language and literature essays organised in terms of genre and moves respectively?

The essays from the two contexts were identified as falling into two major types, Description-Recount and Exposition-Discussion, with the language context giving rise to both types and the literature context giving rise to the latter type only. Both language and literature essays possessed the three-part, Introduction-Body-Conclusion, structure with the exception of a few literature essays having no conclusions.

The most significant feature of the English language Description-Recount HGE and LGE was that they all expressed strong personal opinions present in all the three parts. The essays mainly opened with Proposition and the Body paragraphs consisted of either Series of Events or Descriptions. The HGE were found to possess appropriate information in each move, for example, appropriate background information in the Introduction paragraph (6.7.1.2).

The English language Exposition-Discussion HGE and LGE had the three parts but in many essays the paragraph boundaries overlapped each other, making it difficult for the reader to understand where the Introduction ended and Body began and Body ended and Conclusion began. Sometimes the move structure would have a General-Specific-General type pattern. The LGE were often found without Propositions and had underdeveloped and disconnected SP-ESP move pairs. A striking feature of both HGE and LGE was that all possessed Conclusions realised mainly with Beyond Proposition move which ended with strong personal opinions and recommendations (6.7.2.1, 6.7.2.2).

The English literature Exposition-Discussion HGE and LGE like the English language Exposition-Discussion HGE and LGE showed problems in paragraph boundary demarcations. Some LGE also did not possess Conclusions. Most of the essays began with Openers narrowing down to Proposition. However, the LGE had O that had little relevance to the central idea or P. Because essays began with O, there was a tendency in both HGE and LGE for the return of O after P is made. In these essays also the LGE did not have proper SP-ESP move pairs and often the Body comprised a narration of the plot. The Conclusions, unlike those in the language essays were brief and were realised with Restating Proposition move which lacked any personal evaluative comments (6.7.3.1, 6.7.3.2)

RQ3) What are the perceptions of the students and the teachers regarding the language and literature essays?

Two points most students and teachers unanimously agreed with were: structure was important for both literature and language essays and literature essays were far more difficult to write than language ones. Students felt that since they were not given adequate guidelines as to how literature essays should be written either in their language or literature classes they faced problems. On the other hand, they did not find the language essays too complicated to write because these essays were in some senses extensions of what they had done before and the topics were familiar to them. In addition to that they found the instructions provided in the Language classes quite helpful for their writing of language essays. They said they had never been made aware of writing rules or strategies in their previous academic life, either for L1 or L2 essay writing. All students thought structure was important for both language and literature essays and most of them felt that structurally the two essay types were similar, but that they differed in terms of style and content (7.2.2.1, 7.2.2.2, 7.2.2.3, 7.2.2.4).

Although structure was seen as an important criterion in literature essay writing by teachers, they felt that content was more important, and that handling of content from a deeper, critical and more psychological angle was necessary for literature essays. Students were also expected to be able to cross-refer to other texts beyond the target text and be familiar with the use of specialist lexis or literary jargon for literature essays, whereas for language essays teachers were looking more for accuracy of language and organisation of ideas.

RQ4) How does what students say they value in essay writing relate to what they say they write?

Students claimed that they valued the following factors for good essay writing: imagination, ability to express independent views, critical thinking, ability to organise ideas in order of priority, good structure and comprehension of rubrics. However, students regretted that in reality they were doing quite the opposite of what they were meant to do. They claimed that this was due to the past educational system where they were not able to write on their own and rote learned several essays to regurgitate like parrots. This made them handicapped in their ability to think and write but also in their knowledge of how to structure essays. Most of them suggested that there should be more argumentative essays in the Language class, in order to enhance their critical thinking and help them to handle writing literature essays better (8.2.2.1).

RQ5) How does what teachers say they value in essay writing relate to the claims about how they assess the work?

Like students, teachers also claimed that they valued students' ability to read and understand texts, think independently, write using good structure and provide not just well supported and coherent arguments but also analytical content. Although teachers valued the above criteria for good essay writing, it was also revealed that they set very predictable essays topics that encouraged students to rote learn and not try to write on their own. The repetitive and descriptive topics set in the language course also did not help students acquire the critical EAP skills that students are required to master for

tertiary education. Teachers reported that they were often liberal with their marking in the First year, and claimed that most students neither had the language proficiency nor the expertise to comprehend the instructional words in the topics nor analyse and argue with confidence and with focus.

RQ6) What is the relationship between the two types of writing?

The answer to this question is presented in detail in section 9.2.2.5 and will not be summarised here.

9.2 Integration of major findings: discussion and implications

Before presenting an integrated discussion of the findings (9.2.2), I begin with a discussion of the issues that led me to develop the analytical models (9.2.1), because there were several issues that led to the development of the models, like challenges I faced with my data, and this I feel needs some discussion of its own.

9.2.1 Issues arising from model development process

Swales' (1990, 2004) pioneering CARS (Create a Research Space) model on introductions of refereed journal articles, Bhatia's (1993) sales promotion letters model, Connor and Mauranen's (1999) grants proposal model, just to name a few, have all been developed by conducting move analysis on texts produced by writers who are experts in their fields. Hence, these texts may be considered successful examples of their genre. Unlike these texts, I could not automatically assume that my student essays were

competent examples of the genre. There was no independent criterion on which I could depend on to say that the essays were good examples of the genre, nor was I able to compare the essays with some other more proficient writing. The only indication I had was from the grades and so I split the data into high and low grade essays before analysing them.

In addition to that, I also had the task of confirming that the essays were actually genres. In my attempt to confirm the essays as genres, I realised that I was in fact looking at two genres and not one. While analysing the essays I identified that I was dealing with two genres, 'the English language essay genre' and 'the English literature essay genre' produced by the First year students of the English Department of Dhaka University in Bangladesh.

For the analysis, I followed the approach to 'move' and 'genre' analysis pioneered by Swales (1990, 2004), and therefore looked for studies which had conducted Move analysis on students' writing. I found Hyland's, Henry and Roseberry's and Matsuzono's genre models relevant as they were all looking at approximately similar types of writing general topic essays. However, none of their models fitted my data exactly. None of their models were based on discipline specific essay writing and Henry and Roseberry did not look at writing under timed settings. I took up the challenge to develop an adapted model that would be sufficiently accurate to analyse and represent my data.

In order to do this, I looked at previous relevant models, studied my students' high grade essays (HGE) and gathered opinions from the community members. Although the HGE did not all completely conform to any of the models, most of them showed sufficient conformity on the basis of which I was able to adapt the models. The variations, I believe, are natural outcomes of writing produced by novices. Hence, my model was actually a development from existing models rather than being very revolutionary. I compared the patterns in the existing models and my students' essays and labelled my Moves and strategies in ways that were more appropriate to my students' essays. While analysing the essays and developing the Exposition-Discussion model, I realised that this model did not apply to some of the language essays and that the language and literature essays had different rhetorical functions. As a result, I developed a second model, Description-Recount model, based on Labov (1972) and Derewianka's (1990) story telling frameworks.

I have often heard people say that students' writing is a 'messy' affair and may be that is one of the reasons why not too many genre analysis studies on novice students' writing are available. My study, I believe, will encourage others to conduct research with a pinch of 'risk' and take on genre analysis studies not only on established genres but also 'fuzzy' genres.

I hope to have shown by taking a tripartite perspective (texts, previous studies, discourse community opinions) it is possible to develop appropriate models for looking at not only my students' writing but at writing of students in similar contexts. This constituted a

response to the methodological challenge that arose in conducting this research and I believe my response will contribute to the global field of genre analysis.

9.2.2 Relationship between the findings of textual data, student data and teacher data: discussion and implications

This subsection aims at pulling together the major findings that emerged as a result of my topic and text analyses and work with students and teachers. Hence, the next sections will discuss the significance and implications of the findings from the perspective of five major issues that emerged from this study.

9.2.2.1 Sources of information for writing

It is evident from the study (4.3.2, 6.8.2, 7.1.2.3, 7.2.2.2.i, 7.2.2.4.2.i, 7.3.2, 8.3.1) that students experience writing differently depending on the source of information they used when composing. In this study, the three writing situations found were (4.3.2, 5.5), 1) personal writing based on highly emotional life experiences, hence, source-text free personal writing, 2) general world knowledge or current affairs essays, also source-text free writing and, 3) heavily source-text dependent disciplinary writing. The first two types of writing were produced for the language class which takes no responsibility for the content of any source-texts whereas the last ones relies heavily on students' reading, understanding and interpretation of literary source-texts before the actual process of writing.

It was found (7.2.2.2.iii, 7.3.2, 8.2.2.6, 8.3.4) that there is a mismatch between the requirements of the disciplinary classes and the tasks practised by the students in the language class. The interviews drew me to conclude that the literature essays that were source-text dependent writing were far more difficult and critical than the language essays (both personal and general knowledge ones). Even students who enjoyed literature found writing literature essays intimidating and a complex process. This is evident from the difficulty students had with: presenting the main idea in the thesis statement (6.6.1, 7.2.2.4.1.i, 8.2.2.3.1.i), in structuring and sequencing and lack of analytical indepth in the information provided for Supporting Proposition and Elaborating Supporting Proposition (SP-ESP) move pair in the Body paragraphs in most average and low grade essays (LGE) particularly in the literature essays (7.2.2.4.2.i, 8.2.2.3.2.i, 6.8.2) and also inability to express a voice confidently in the end in the high grade literature essays (6.5.3.2, 7.2.2.4.3.i). The low grade literature essays often are unable to develop the Body transition frame markers appropriately (6.7.3.1) and realise the SP-ESP moves with recounting of the plot which is a wrong transfer of the skills learnt from the personal language essays (6.6.2., 8.2.2.3.2.ii, 8.3.2).

Relegating literature from the pre-university English syllabus has proved a major setback for students not just in the English Department but also all students in general who remain unaware of the benefits of studying literature. Literature enables the mind to think, which opens up avenues for emotions to play in the mind before it can come to take a firm position and be objective. Students who have not done literature at school are unprepared to meet the challenges at the university where they are asked not only to

think in this way but to express their thoughts in well-written L2 as well. Literature allows space for originality and echoing Dutta's (2001: 126) words we should encourage our students to "make their individual investment to claim ownership". In order to claim ownership of texts, the writer has to be a confident user of his/her critical mind and have a clear bold voice. The next section, thus, turns to the issues of critical thinking and writer's voice.

9.2.2.2 Ability to write with a critical voice

The most desired and universal attribute in higher education is critical thinking. This is illustrated in the numerous instances when teachers and students used words like 'analyse', 'analytical', 'critical', 'understand', 'think', 'academic', 'mature', 'comprehension'. These words were connotative of the significance of the higher order skill of critical thinking when they spoke regarding the characteristics of tertiary level student writing and when they expressed their dissatisfaction about students' performance in writing essays, particularly literature ones. It is enormously difficult for students, who come with educational backgrounds where they were used to rote learning and being spoon fed by the teachers in class or coaching centres, to express their own opinions using their voice (8.2.2.5.iii and v, 8.3.1). At the university, they confront a situation which cuts them off from their past learning experiences and forces them to be independent and bring out their critical voice. This is too high a jump for students who did not benefit from previous educational experiences to think on their own and now are required to engage in critical thinking, express their voice, their position, and not accept information and knowledge at face value but raise questions to generate new ideas and

study an issue from multiple perspectives. As it has been mapped by Moon (2008), critical thinking is the ability to evaluate and judge a piece of information deeply from all angles with academic assertiveness as well as emotional insight. In addition to 'objective' processes, Moon (2004, 2008) also stresses the need for emotion and reflection as facilitators or prerequisites of critical thinking. This is clearly revealed in my findings from literature HGE analysis (6.5.2.2, excerpt 44).

In writing about literature, experiential involvement must mingle with critical thinking when issues, topics, feelings, relationships are the subject matters of critical thinking. This ability to personalise textual evidence is an essential feature of literature essay writing. Engaging with the emotional self is also a very important issue for Bengalis which is evident from the long list of language essays topics related to our history, language movement, culture, identity as a nation (Appendix 2). My students are good at expressing their thoughts of emotional nature. However, they cannot it seems go beyond that and able to use their personal voice in an academic task with relation to source-text responsible writing, that is, the literature essay context. They are, therefore, unable to attain 'academic assertiveness' which Moon (2008: 77) defines as "the thinker's personal confidence, her voice in academia and her ability to process, work with and express critical ideas and action." It is clearly understood from student interviews (7.2.2.1.ii, 7.3.1) that students lack self-esteem, do not want to take risks by disagreeing with conventional interpretations of the texts. Most of the low grade essay (LGE) writers are not even willing to advance their interpretations and prefer to simply take a safer option of narrating the plot. They are unable to possess that assertiveness which is

essential to be a critical thinker. T6 rightly pointed out that only the top students were willing to challenge conventional views and were the 'risk takers'. In fact, while writing for literature students are neither able to have personal engagement nor write with a critical voice as is evident from the absence of Hyland's (2001, 2004c, 2005) metadiscoursal features of 'we', 'us', 'I' in the language and literature essays (6.8.2).

This 'academic assertiveness' or the writers' confidence is what my students lack and this is what they should be encouraged to develop. Reflecting on my own university days, I recall how I never answered questions that the rest of the class would generally opt to write on, or even if I did I would argue and voice my opinion in such a way that would be very different from others. But may be this was the case because I was confident in my language, my understanding of the text and was ready to take risks, although I too did not know anything about structuring an essay.

9.2.2.3 The English Department as a discourse community

Following Swales' definition of discourse community, it is observed that the English Department, although it does not provide any formally documented assessment criteria or the 'dos and don'ts' of essays writing, tacitly expects students to be aware of some social practices to fulfil the expected goals. Unfortunately, students in the First year remain completely ignorant of even the knowledge of what they are going to study in the English Department, as has been cited in Chapter 2, section 2.1.3. When students arrive at the Department and find themselves faced with completely unexpected approaches to study, they do not know how to seek increased participation in the

discourse community. Moreover, there are supposed to be ‘participatory mechanisms’ among the expert and novice members with which information exchange can take place, but we see rare occasions when these mechanisms occur and so most students remain in the dark and cannot participate fully. Teachers not having provided the mechanisms, like discussing the question topics or even the rubrics and how essays differ in their structure, expect students to write on their own academically with focus and logical argumentation, understand source texts, make connections between language and literature essay writing and so on. Some teachers vividly expressed their own lackings in the interviews (8.2.2.1.iii). Moreover, students did not get enough practice time for writing Exposition-Discussion type essays in the language class as it is introduced in the syllabus towards the end of the year as a small component (8.2.2.2.iv, 8.2.2.4.1.i). The setting of too many personal essays in First year examinations contradicted what teachers wanted students to produce, that is, analytical essays (8.2.2.6). In that case, it seems rather unfair that we teachers want our students who have never read English Literature before to read, understand and analyse texts as complex as ‘The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock’, *The Merchant of Venice*, ‘My Oedipus Complex’ etc. without properly providing them with the tools to tackle their problems.

One aspect of the problem is that students practice more Description-Recount essays for the language course and are expected to do only analytical essays for literature courses irrespective of what the instructional words are in the questions. What they learn in their language class writing becomes inappropriate for their literature essays. When they try to transfer the skills they do it wrongly. In addition to that, because students do not get

any knowledge as to how a literature essay should be structured or written and are only briefed about the language essay structure by their teachers in the language classes they only worry about structure in their language essays.

This fact about how things get done needs to be imparted to students by the expert members. There is another important issue according to Swalesian criteria which is very important for discourse community membership: the meaningful use of 'specific lexis'. And this applies more particularly to the reading and writing of English Literature. There is a course in the First year that addresses this issue of teaching figurative language but it is only restricted to reading and understanding. The course unfortunately does not extend its skills to writing of literature essays which would have been very useful for the students.

We teachers must realise that there can be no automatic membership. The 'sea-change' is a gradual process of socialisation where novices become successful novices or good students and move from peripheral participation to increased and higher quality participation as observed by Wharton (1999). This gradual induction is a complex process which cannot take place overnight. To become successful writers, students must abandon their informal style of writing they brought with them when they entered the programme in favour of a more formal, rhetorically demanding and conceptually critical form of writing as is specified by Flowerdew (2000a) and also evident from the texts I analysed in the two courses. The teachers must be conscious of the fact that heightening the discourse community knowledge among the novices will contribute in advancing

their understanding of what is a stable genre in the two contexts, what the social conventions are, what insider knowledge they must possess to produce the texts in the particular settings. I turn to this issue in the next section.

9.2.2.4 Genre stability and genre change in relation to the English

Department context

This section links very closely with the idea of the English Department being a discourse community. The stabilising of genres takes place by the implicit rules and social practices—who plays what role, what needs to be done, how one should speak/write etc as has been noted by Ramanathan and Kaplan (1996, 1997, 2000).

There have been several controversies regarding the stability of students' essays as genres because of their varied nature. In Chapter 2, section 2.4.2, I indicated this issue of English language and literature essays as separate genres which was confirmed by my textual and contextual analyses. The high grade language and literature essays tended to conform to the demands of the questions and teachers' expectations. It is revealed that the timed essays are stable genres in the English Department if we think of them in terms of their assessment purposes.

On the point of genre stability, it needs to be mentioned that although it was found from topic analyses (4.3.2) that language and literature essays are separate stable genres this research also identified from further enquiry that the students were unable to recognise the features that contribute to the stability of the essays, especially in case of the

literature essays. From teacher interviews it is found that many of the teacher-expected conventions and social practices remained absent from the essays, particularly from the literature essays, even in HGE. Conventions like cross referencing of other texts, sources, bringing in personalised experiences to connect with textual experiences are highly valued by teachers (8.2.2.1.ii). In additions to those, associated academic practices like watching different versions of the same movie of the text being studied, giving presentations, participating in class debate on the literary texts and bringing in their significance in their essay writing are also highly valued by the teachers but regrettably remain unaddressed by the students (8.2.2.1.iii, 8.2.2.5.iv).

Some teachers did blame themselves and the evaluation system for this situation (8.2.2.1.iii, 8.2.2.5.iii, 8.2.2.6). The examination questions are never set in ways that would encourage students to use these associated disciplinary activities, nor are questions set in ways that would discourage students from rote learning their essays beforehand. On rare occasions, students do manage to bring in the above mentioned teacher expected values but these necessary practices need to be undertaken not by the select few but by the general population to acquire stabilisation.

Another issue that automatically comes in when we talk of genre stability is the issue of genre change because genres are dynamic and are naturally subject to change with progression of time and change in contexts. I again cite my own writing experience to illustrate this point. When I wrote my essays for my undergraduate and postgraduate studies some twenty years back teachers never commented on structure or thesis

statement or lack of coherence, nor was I ever worried about these factors because I was completely unaware they existed. I would often present my thesis statement at the end of the essay and teachers did not point that out. I wonder if structure was not considered important at that time. Today issues of structure, coherence and focused ideas are perceived as vital by teachers in writing of essays and these have been brought about by the demands to meet the changes in the social, global and technological revolutions as rightfully identified by Ramanathan and Kaplan (2000). Readers today do not have the patience to wait for the main idea till the end. Writing today has to be very structured to meet the readers' schematic expectations. Hence, genres change and textual patterns change. And it is the responsibility of the expert members to make the novices realise of these changes.

However, only in cases where the student is extremely fluent and articulate does the reader/examiner/teacher/expert member provide room for "textual experimentation" (Ramanathan and Kaplan 2000: 182). This happened in the case of S6, the Third year student and a high grade achiever who reiterated in her interview what Ramanathan and Kaplan observed that she would not mind "breaking the rules" in her essays now that she was more confident in her writing (7.2.2.4.i, 7.3.3).

Students who come to the university with a completely different set of academic practices from their past education system find themselves in a completely different and intimidated world facing another completely different set of academic socialisation practices. It, therefore, becomes the role of both the language and literature teachers to

shoulder the initial responsibility of acculturating the novices in the First year to the writing practices and try to stabilise the essay genres of the English Department.

9.2.2.5 Relationship between English language and literature courses

The fact that the language course is meant to provide support to the beginner students is highly questionable. The writing done in the two different contexts is very different from each other with hardly any attempt made by the influential members of the discourse community to make them more compatible.

The language course is aimed at handling all the four traditional language skills and although writing essays is considered very important for assessment purposes it does not get that much attention from the teachers in terms of quality time they spend teaching how to write them (8.2.2.6). Moreover, the expository/argumentative essays are not practised that much because they are taught towards the end of the year and there is hardly enough time for practising them (8.2.2.4.1.i). The little essay writing practice that students do is for the language classes that concentrate on topics that are source-text free based on either students' personal experience or background knowledge. In contrast, students are not provided with any instructions on how to write literature essays, which are heavily source-text dependent (7.3.5, 8.2.2.4.1.ii). Unfortunately, students in our context are so used to being dependent on teachers and prepared notes that they are wary of trying out things on their own and since teachers do not provide instructions on literature writing, students simply write using their own whims rather than trying to make some connections between language essays and literature essays.

From the topic analyses, in terms of Field and Rhetorical functions (4.3.2), it is found that there are more differences than similarities between the topics that students write for their language and literature courses. This indicates that in an EAP setting, there is the need to teach a different vocabulary set, write using a different register and a different voice. It also raises issues about connection between an adjunct course and main courses. The students are able to handle language essays relatively well as they are extensions of similar writing they did in the past and also because they are topics that students can easily relate to, their own life experiences or current happenings of the world. Whereas, the literature essays are just too complex for the students where they have to present a critical understanding of the text, of the writer's psyche, incorporate other sources, use specialist language and be creative at the same time.

Unable to comprehend and get acclimatised to these complex processes of writing, most students revert to their age-old method of rote learning essays from notebooks, more particularly for the literature ones. Once students start to rote-learn texts without trying to make meaning, they do not worry about what they are writing or how they are doing it. But we know that for any successful and meaningful communication sequencing and structuring of information is necessary because members belonging to the discourse community share a set of similar assumptions about text production. This is all the more necessary in written discourse in the absence of the reader and the writer from each other. When students do not think of what is asked for in the topic and write, they are

not conforming to the readers' expectations. Even if they are conforming in terms of the content by memorising chunks of texts they do not present them according to the order in which they are asked for.

A traditional assumption is that academic English has a homogenous set of skills and strategies which can be applied to all academic disciplines. Following that notion, it is assumed that if a skills based approach is taken to teaching academic writing then students can transfer and apply those common skills in their particular disciplinary contexts. I believe this was the aim behind designing the English Language course (formerly called Foundation Course) which was intended for all students across the Arts Faculty. But as things stand now²⁵, though the course has been evaluated as being useful by both students and teachers, they also acknowledged that tertiary level academic disciplines are essentially heterogeneous and that further improvement should be made to the course to cater to the specific needs of students towards their parent disciplines.

Sensitising novices with their disciplinary academic, social and ideological conventions with a course gauged more towards their disciplines is what teachers and students realised was lacking and also felt was necessary. They, however, did agree that the course was useful because it offered the recognisable skills that were meant to have been introduced at the secondary and higher secondary levels but unfortunately remained untaught. Hence, students had to be also told the basic things like structure of a paragraph, an essay, how to use citations, attributing quotations etc. It is also true that in

²⁵ The English Language course has stopped running centrally mainly due to lack of teaching faculty and also because teachers felt it had to be discipline specific

timed examination settings giving reference list or matters regarding plagiarism are not serious issues with teachers. However, we must remember that if these are not considered important now, students will again remain ill equipped for further stages in their academic and professional lives and continue facing same problems.

By analysing novice writers' essays who have not yet been initiated into the academic practices of the discourse community from the perspective of textual patterns and by interacting with both the novice and expert community members, I have been able to understand what students do, what they can successfully do, what they cannot, where their problems lie, what their priorities are, what teachers want from their student writers and what they think of the writing situation.

The above discussion suggests that the following three things are now needed by my students —1) the language of the parent discipline, 2) the rules and conventions used by the parent discipline and, 3) the more general and independent features of academic writing which make it instantly recognisable, as recommended by Hoadly-Maidment (2000). The last category is covered more or less by the English language course. But the former two remain missing, from which students doing English Literature can benefit to get into the disciplinary genre.

9.2.2.6 Importance of structure in essays

It is evident (6.7) that structure is the matrix with which the information or the content is arranged for building an orderly text (essay), which is realised by the successive Moves

with their strategies. Inappropriate use of the matrix or the Move-strategies generated difficulties for me analysing the texts. Understanding the text patterns/structure/frames enable the communicators (reader-writer/speaker-listener) to approach a text systematically which in essence speeds up the communication.

It is only natural to presume that high grade essays (HGE) would have the moves realised in the expected way. That was, however, not the case, because even HGE were found to possess flaws in the pattern (6.4.4, 6.5.1.3, 6.5.3.1, 6.6.4). Such an outcome is very natural to novice writing where structuring essays was never taught. Although all teachers and students considered structure important for essay writing, it was found from teacher interviews that in the First year they did not penalise students in the literature essays for flawed structure if they compensated with better ideas, indepth analysis, linguistic agility and dexterity. Moreover, writing under time pressure, having to read English literature for the first time, the educational milieu and academic practices that students belonged to in the past all added to teachers' leniency, which certainly was something teachers would allow only in the First year and only with the literature essays and not language ones.

The problem that I encountered with the HGE, both literature and language Exposition-Discussion essays, was mainly at the macro structural level, with Introduction-Body-Conclusion divisions not clearly marked. Introductions would run for several paragraphs and then merge with the Body paragraphs (6.3.1, 6.5.1.3) and Body paragraph with Conclusion (6.5.3.2). In the micro level too HGE Introductions were found to have

problems, like having general information return after the Proposition being made (6.6.4). This study, therefore, shows that though some novices have high levels of linguistic agility and well developed ideas, difficulties remain in producing appropriate texts with appropriate text structures in specific genres. With the LGE, problems were there in both macro and mirco structural levels and because the moves were often realised by incorrect strategical choices, it was very difficult to make sense of the line of argument (6.6.1, 6.6.2, 6.6.3, 6.6.4).

These findings, therefore, suggest that structure is important to organise information. It is doubly important for students who attain mid-range or low grades because they commit more linguistics errors and present confused arguments. As EAP practitioners, we should realise that it is the weak writers who precisely need more EAP input to improve their writing as reiterated by Krishnamurthy and Kosem (2007). Therefore, I feel the LGE writers should become all the more aware of the “predictable patterns” (Swales and Feak 2004: 12) to organise their thoughts for the readers’ advantage as well as for themselves to be on track of what they are writing. Since organising information is done differently for different types of writing as is evident from the two models developed to analyse the essays, it is important that students are made aware of these features.

Some writers may choose not to follow systematic patterns of essay writing saying that adherence to rules restricts their natural flow of writing. I think this is fine in the case of creative writing. However, in the case of academic writing, I would allow space for

experimentation only if the writer is extremely proficient and has been able to carry himself/herself beyond the basics. Breaking rules and experimenting with novel forms would not be a wise idea for the average population of novice academic writers, especially when writing essays during timed pressure situations aimed for evaluation purposes. Under such conditions, it becomes all the more necessary to produce work following writing conventions and text structure.

An implication of this study is that students in the First year should be explicitly taught how to structure their essays because this study has revealed how different the essays can be in different contexts in terms of their structure and content organisation. Moreover, this study has also identified (4.3.2) that the essays that students are made to write for the two classroom contexts are very different and there is very little link between the essays written for the language course and literature courses. Although the Exposition-Discussion model could be used to analyse the argumentative type essays from the two contexts, the literature essays required more skills and different ways by which they could realise their moves, for instance the SP-ESP move pair (6.5.2).

9.3 A way forward

The English Language course exposes students to primarily two types of writing, 'Description-Recount' and 'Exposition-Discussion', which are both written without any responsibility on source-texts. The former is very personal and possesses a very different style from the second type. Students towards the end of their language course move on to writing 'Exposition-Discussion' essays. These are argumentative in nature

and belong to a position in between EGP and EAP, but not EGAP (English for General Academic Purposes) (Jordan 1997). These essays deal with skills necessary to present argument and counter-argument and take a position but they do not require students to get immersed in literacy skills where they would have to go and read and search for information from different sources in order to write on the topic assigned with a critical voice and by acknowledging the outside readings.

On having done these two types of writing, language teachers assume students have acquired enough skills to write literature essays for their mainstream literature courses. But what teachers do not realise is that the English Literature courses run side by side and students are made to write in their tutorial sessions from the beginning, where they have to write very analytical and complex 'Exposition-Discussion' essays that rely heavily on source-texts belonging to the discipline of English Literature. This transition from one course writing to another is not a smooth one, as has been observed by Lea and Street (1998).

Figure 9.1 illustrates writing done in these courses on a continuum, not only of difficulty but also a continuum from source-text independent writing at the left to a highly source-text responsible writing on the right respectively. This problem was already indicated by me at the outset of the study (1.3). To make the transition a smoother one the need to bridge the gap or fill in the 'missing link' is essential as is shown in Figure 9.1.

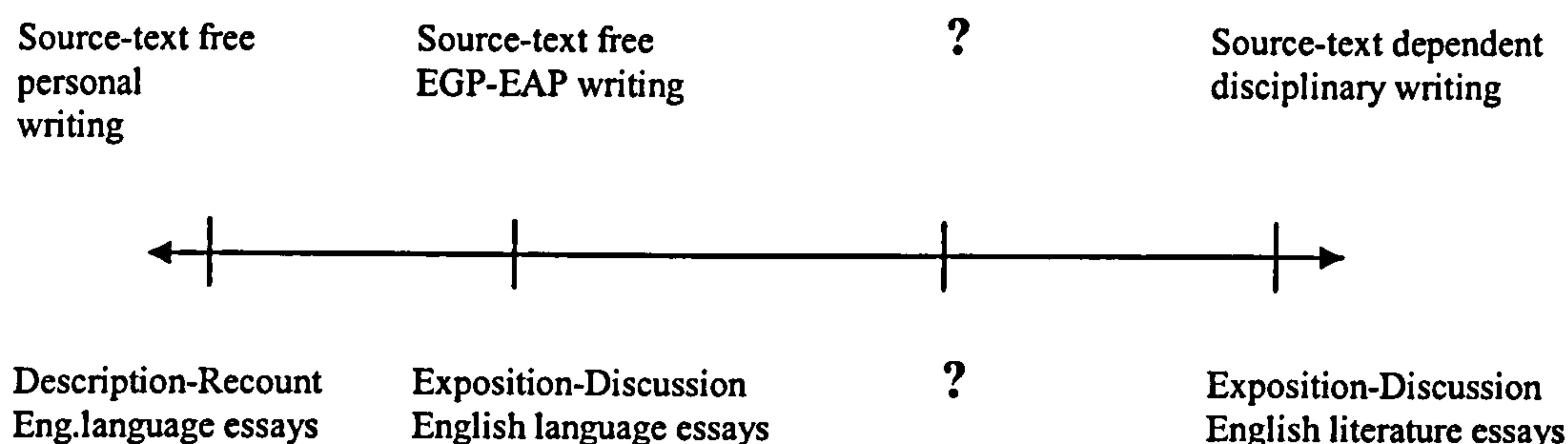


Figure 9.1: The different essays in terms of source-text free/responsible writing and level of difficulty in the continuum with the ‘missing link’

The above findings add substantially to our understanding that the current language course writing is inadequate and either an adjunct writing course or increasing the amount of writing tasks that would be inclined towards discipline specific ESAP (English for Specific Academic Purposes) writing is needed. Here, students would be required to base their essay writing on either literary texts or even non-literary texts. For instance, students could be asked to select a text, the themes of which could be discussed briefly in class, because the main focus would be given to the teaching of how the essays could be written. Students would look at how to introduce the central idea of the essay, cite pieces of evidence and develop them, incorporate sources and quotations, use intext citations and so on, using a genre based pedagogy to writing. In the meantime, students would be given a topic to work on, that is, do library work, search for other criticisms, make notes and finally get prepared for an open book examination in front of the teacher. The open book examination would allow them to learn using outside sources meaningfully without having to rote-learn notes. The students should be given at least a month’s time for the preparatory work before sitting the examination in class.

And this should invariably be done before they start writing for their core disciplinary essays. Hence, students will have a gradual induction into the discourse community practice which can begin from easy to difficult, with the EGP-EAP type ‘Description-Recount’ and ‘Exposition-Discussion’ essay writing and then moving on to ESAP literature text based essay writing before writing for their core literature modules. Figure 9.2 illustrates the proposed ‘bridged’ link in the continuum.

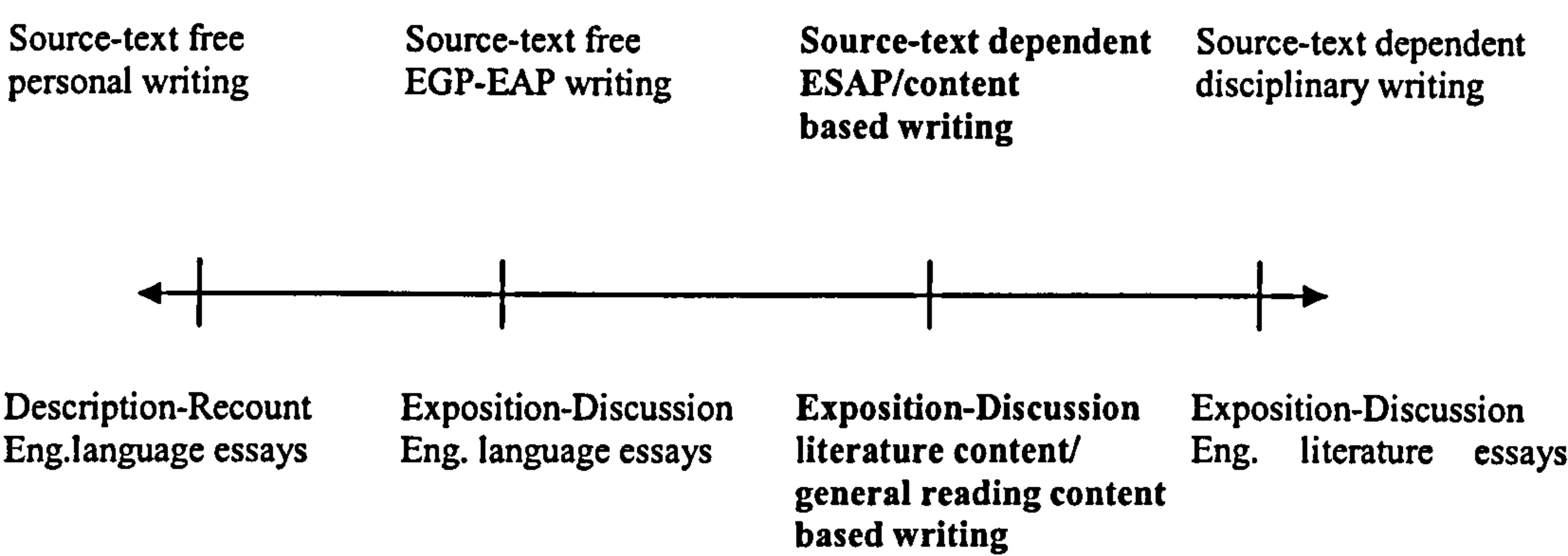


Figure 9.2: The different essays in the continuum with the ‘bridged’ link

As is evident from Figure 9.2, this proposed ‘bridged’ continuum does not exclude the other forms of writing that are currently being done in the Department, because it believes that any form of writing helps develop one’s writing. It only proposes that the time spent on the first two types in the continuum should be lessened to give emphasis to the teaching of the third ESAP essay writing as a preparation to disciplinary writing. In continuing to write the former two types of essays students should be made aware of their use and how connections could be drawn between the former two and the latter two. The anecdotal and personal experiences that students use so extensively could be

appropriately used in literature essays where students would try to link the experiences narrated in the source texts with that of their personal experiences (8.2.2.4.1.iii). Since literature largely deals with human emotions, relationships and experiences, students could draw on their own life experiences and incorporate them in the essays to illustrate a line of argument objectively and academically but with personal engagement. According to Bhatia's (2004) concept of 'genre colony', all the essays, English language and literature, that students write are related members of the colony. Sometimes they share the communicative purposes, and at other times they differ in a number of respects as is seen from this study. The 'bridged link' writing (source-text dependent ESAP/content based writing and Exposition-Discussion Literature/content reading based writing) would be a stronger member in that colony fulfilling the needs and requirements of the discourse community members. Thus, students will be required to practise connecting narrative writing with exposition/argumentation in tandem. Students should be made to realise that each type of writing can become important tools to serve the purpose of another if applied properly.

9.4 Summary of major contributions

The present study has investigated what type of essays students write in the First Year of the English Department in Dhaka University, how they are structured, what socialisation and ideological practices are valued by the discourse community members, where lies the problems and what could be done to minimise the gap between the different types of essays written. As such, it has made a number of contributions both to the local context and the broader field of genre analysis of student writing.

9.4.1 Developing genre analysis model using novice students' data

Trying to develop genre analysis models based on students' data, that is, novice students' essays which do not conform to any existing standard or form has been quite a challenging task. Attempting to establish not so 'perfect' data as genre was not an easy process either. This bottom-up approach to studying genre will be of interest to not only people who work in similar contexts and may want to do research on similar data, but will also be of interest to academics in more stable education systems like in the West where a lot of research has already been carried out in attempts to understand and improve students' plights. I believe these people would be interested to know what is happening in other remote parts of the world, like Bangladesh.

9.4.2 Contribution towards NNS disciplinary writing in NNS contexts

A lot of research has been conducted on ESL/EFL writing done within NS composition class contexts but very little literature is available on discipline specific writing done by NNS speakers in NNS contexts, in my case it is all Bangladeshi students writing about English Literature in Bangladesh. This study will certainly benefit the many other similar contexts around the world, like Pakistan, Nepal, Indonesia, Malaysia, just to name a few, where students are doing English Literature as their major subject whose mother tongue is not English and have to depend on the literature available from NS contexts.

9.4.3 Contribution towards timed examination writing

Research on writing has generally concentrated on untimed writing. In contrast to that, this research concerns writing produced under timed conditions which again is a common and valid assessment practice in many parts of the world still where teachers have to deal with large classroom situations and with limited logistic resources. In addition to that, often it is argued that the notion of structure is more relevant for writing that is done through several drafts, where the student is able to organise their thoughts gradually into a coherent piece of text. However, my argument against that is students can produce far better products under timed conditions if they know how to structure an essay well. My students come to write for timed examinations with a lot of ideas but since they do not have the notion of text patterning they keep writing whatever they have in their heads as they come without being aware of what to put where. If text patterns are taught to students according to different genres, they would then be able to organise their thoughts better within the limited time because then they will already carry with them the knowledge of the schematic structure.

9.4.4 Methodological contribution

Many genre analysis studies concern the 'page' and rarely have studies moved from text to context, probably because not all studies have sufficient scope to include detailed study of context. One of the strengths of this research, within its limited time frame, has been the aspect of going beyond the 'page' and applying a multi-method approach, that is, integrating written text analysis with contextual knowledge attained from teachers and students participating in the discourse community.

9.5 Summary of recommendations

Although teaching writing to students was not carried out in the classroom using the models developed to analyse the different types of essays, it certainly recommends that they should be tried out to confirm whether students' writing developed or not after gaining the knowledge of text structure. The study has found that adequate writing instruction is not provided to the students, due to which students lack confidence in writing and resort to rote learning. On a departmental level, the study would hopefully make the policy makers rethink how the writing component is designed in the curriculum and initiate some developmental changes. This study recommends for using Genre-based pedagogy over product or process approaches because it combines the two approaches (Badger and White 2000) and brings together language, content and context and involves teachers in providing students with the systematic learning tools to show how writing is done within the discourse community (Hyland 2004b, 2007). It develops genre awareness among the students, or in words of Grabe and Kaplan (1996: 260), "students develop the sense of shaping roles of genres in writing, and how language structure and genre constrain the ways in which language communicates information".

Thompson (2006) emphasises that corpora can play a decisive role in EAP teaching, as they are evidence of real language in use on which analysis can be conducted to study the linguistic, generic and discourse features to detect what is happening/not happening in the texts, what can be done further for a better communication and so on. Hence, authentic corpus data could in principle be used for teaching purposes. For instance, in

the writing classes the 'Move-Strategy' models could be used to familiarise students with the genre and show how the information is sequenced and eventually enable students to have cognitive control over the generic/schematic structure of the different parts of the essays (Swales 1990, 2004, Bhatia 1993, 2002, 2004, Hyland 1990, 2007, Huttner 2005, Bruce 2008). Genre knowledge would also enable students to be aware of what is expected of them and they would be able to identify differences in text structures and their communicative purposes when they confront them. As a result, they would be careful not to indiscriminately transfer skills and patterns of one text genre to another, as it happened with LGE writers of literature essays giving a detail of events in the whole essay. Moreover, they would also be able to realise when these transferences are allowable and necessary. Samples of good writing compared and contrasted with poor cases can be cited to allow students to identify for themselves, through the authentic texts, the problem areas, how they are constructed and what variations can be expected or made as suggested by many (Hyland 1990, Flowerdew 2000b, Badger and White 2000, Coffin et al. 2003, Huttner 2005, Bruce 2008). Students would also be able to relate these models as products of the real world and have more confidence in producing their own (Huttner 2005, Hyland 2007). Genre based pedagogy can offer excellent opportunities for students to get a control over structure (Hyland 1990) through which content can be presented systematically.

9.6 Limitations

Due to time constraints, one major limitation of this study is the use of a small corpus to undertake text analysis. I was tempted to do more text collection even in my Third year

to increase the sample number of each HGE and LGE classifications. I felt that if I got more data I could be more certain of my emerging patterns.

Another limitation of this study concerns the choice of students interviewed. Ideally, I would have chosen a pair of students (one achieving high grade in their essays and another low grade) from each of the five groups from the English Language class. However, due to the unexpected closure of the university for political reasons I had to resort to an alternative way.

9.7 Further research

One research area that can proceed from the present research is trying out the models developed to confirm their usefulness and applicability in classroom pedagogy.

In addition to looking at the structure of the essays it would be useful to also study the linguistic features of the text, the metadiscoursal features of the transitions in particular, as they are very essential in structuring and organising the paragraphs and ideas.

Further research can be conducted with the teachers about their attitude towards the models I developed, whether they are ready to use them, whether their attitude towards their own practice would change as a result of my findings from the students' responses and so on.

Further research can also be conducted by comparing and contrasting the text structure of timed and untimed writing, or First year undergraduates with Final year undergraduates. It would be interesting to see what further development or changes would be required on the present models when the essays of mature writers are analysed.

9.8 Final conclusion

During this research process, I often wondered why I had not been taught to structure my texts more academically. I realise now that I always learnt to write through trial and error method. Structuring this project was also a formidable experience. Each time I wrote something I was thinking whether I made the right 'move' with the right information, whether I was structuring the thesis properly, whether my 'move's contributed to the fulfilment of their communicative functions, whether this text possessed recognisable features to belong to its genre and would it finally meet my readers' expectations. It would not have been such an ordeal if I had been taught to discipline my structure from the beginning of my academic life. Being a teacher now and having understood what students go through after entering university, I hope they never make similar complaints.

I believe developing appropriate models of writing for different genres through a thorough analysis of students' writing combined with ethnographic techniques and implementing them using appropriate mechanisms can help students with their initiation and participation in their disciplinary discourse communities. I also believe that these

are just a few of the many prerequisites to the development of the teaching and learning of writing and a lot more still needs to be done for it to be an ideal academic community.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Informing students to participate in the research

FIRST YEAR STUDENTS

I am currently doing my PhD at Warwick University. My research focuses on the language and literature essays written by the First Year students' of the English Department, Dhaka University. As I am in the process of collecting my data, I would highly appreciate if you would cooperate with me in doing the following:

1. I need you to answer a questionnaire for me, so please be present in Lecture Theatre # 2 on Monday July 17, 2006 from 11:00a.m.-12:00 noon.
2. Please hand in your marked scripts to your class representative or leave them in my mail box with your contact details so that I can return them to you after photocopying.
3. I will also be conducting interviews with students and would be grateful if you would volunteer to participate. Please let your class representative know if you are interested, so that we can make arrangements for the meetings.

N.B.: All your responses/essays will be used only for research purposes and will be treated with strictest confidentiality and anonymity.

Thank you.

Nevin Farida

Department of English, DU.

Appendix 2: English Language Essay Topics

1. My favourite Sport
2. Qualities of a Good Friend
3. The Importance of Learning English
4. The Holiday you Enjoyed the most
5. My Career Plans
6. Visit to an Interesting Place
7. On Being a University Student
8. Popularity of Band Shows
9. Necessity (or lack of it) of the Foundation Course
10. President Bill Clinton's Visit to Bangladesh
11. Problems you have faced while getting Admitted into the Dhaka University
12. The Campus of Dhaka University
13. Qualities of a Good Teacher
14. Political Instability of Bangladesh
15. What do you plan to do in the coming five years?
16. Effects of TV advertisements on Children
17. Your Autobiography
18. Saving the Environment: Your Suggestions
19. A Boring Experience
20. Student Politics: An Obstacle to Proper Education
21. Some things that are unique about Bangladesh
22. What you like and dislike about the University of Dhaka
23. An Afternoon at the *Boi Mela*
24. Three things you cannot live without
25. Problems in the DU Halls of Residence
26. Bengali should be the medium of education at the university level. Do you agree or disagree?
27. The Future of Bangladesh Cricket
28. Do you think *hartals* should be banned? Give reasons for your answer.
29. The best film I have ever seen
30. Changes I would like to see at my University
31. Main causes of terrorism in Bangladesh
32. Equal rights for women: Your views
33. The charms of city life
34. Life of a rickshapuller
35. Your suggestions to stop corruption in government offices in Bangladesh
36. Drawbacks of democracy in developing nations
37. Your orientation programme at Dhaka University
38. Effects of dish antenna on our culture
39. Visit to a famous place
40. International mother language day
41. 21st February
42. *Ekushey Boi mela*
43. Why I chose to study English?
44. The festival I enjoy most
45. *Eid* festival
46. Cable TV should be censored
47. The *Pohela Boishak*

48. The Importance of 21st February to our national life
49. Private universities in Bangladesh—Advantages and Disadvantages
50. Industrial progress is affecting the environment in a negative way. Do you agree?
51. How is your generation different from your parents' and grandparents' generation? Does the gap create problems for you?
52. Your role model
53. Importance of co-curricular activities
54. My Dhaka University days: Expectation and achievement
55. The course I enjoy most in the First year
56. Life today has become more complex than it was in the past. Do you agree? Use specific reasons and details to support your answer.
57. If I were a Millionaire

Appendix 3: Analysis of English language essay topics from perspective of Field, Sub-field and Function²⁶

Main Field	Sub-field	Topics	Function
1a) Place: Bangladesh	Festivals/Events/Culture	1.Some things that are unique about Bangladesh 2.International mother language day	D/R D/R
	- Problem aspects	1.Political Instability of Bangladesh 2.Do you think <i>hartals</i> should be banned? Give reasons for your answer	Ex Pos-Rea
1b) Place: Dhaka Uni	- Problems	1.Problems in the DU Halls of Residence 2. Changes I would like to see at my University	D/R D/Ex
	- DU as an Institution	1.The Campus of Dhaka University 2.What you like and dislike about the University of Dhaka	D/R D/R
	- Life in DU	1.Your orientation programme at Dhaka University	D/R
		2.My Dhaka University days: Expectation and achievement	D/R
1c) Place: specific	Qualities	1.The charms of city life 2. Drawbacks of democracy in developing nations	D/R D/Ex
1d) Place: general	Qualities	1.Visit to an interesting place 2. The Holiday you Enjoyed the most	D/R D/R
2a) People: Self	Likings/dislikings/experiences	1. My favourite Movie 2. On Being a University Student	D/R D/R
	Future Plans	1. If I were a Millionaire 2. What do you plan to do in the coming five years?	D/R D/R

²⁶ Due to word limitation in the Appendices as well, I am presenting here only representative samples of my categorisation

People: Others	-Qualities action/behaviour/attitude	1.Qualities of a Good Friend 2.Life of a rickshapuller 1.Equal rights for women: Your views 2.How is your generation different from your parents' and grandparents' generation? Does the gap create problems for you?	D/R D/R Ex Ex
3. Education	- learning style - Problems	1.Importance of co-curricular activities 2. Bengali should be the medium of education at the university level. Do you agree or disagree? 1. Student Politics: An obstacle to proper education	Ex Pos-Rea Ex
4.Environment		1.Industrial progress is affecting the environment in a negative way. Do you agree? 2. Three things you cannot live without	Pos-Rea D/Ex
5. Media		1.Cable TV should be censored 2.Effects of dish antenna on our culture	Pos-Rea Ex

Appendix 4: English language essay topic categorisation of main functions

Descriptive/ Recount	1. 2.	On Being a University Student President Bill Clinton’s Visit to Bangladesh
Explanation/ Description	1. 2.	The Importance of Learning English Main causes of terrorism in Bangladesh
Position-Reason	1. 2.	Bengali should be the medium of education at the university level. Do you agree or disagree? Do you think <i>hartals</i> should be banned? Give reasons for your answer.

Appendix 5: Literature essay writing topics (representative sample)

Long Essay Questions

Eng 102 (Introduction to Poetry)

1. Discuss the different ways Robert Herrick and Adrienne Rich look at women in their poems.
2. Shakespeare in Sonnet 18, “Shall I Compare...” and Donne in the poem “The Sun Rising” are considered unconventional. Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer.
3. Compare any one of Shakespeare’s sonnets with Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s ‘How do I love Thee?’ in terms of their treatment of love.
4. Do you think the depiction of evening in Gray’s “Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard” and Eliot’s “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” is appropriate to their respective moods, settings and situations? Give reasons for your answer.
5. Compare and contrast Adrienne Rich and Ted Hughes’ use of animal imagery in their poetry.

Eng 103 (Intro to Prose)

6. Compare and contrast “Shooting an Elephant” and “My Oedipus Complex” as first person narratives.
7. Write an essay on the use of irony in fiction by referring to at least one short story and one novel that you have read.
8. D.H. Lawrence calls the novel “The bright book of life.” Does your reading of *Pride and Prejudice* and *The Financial Expert* bear out his assertion about the novel?
9. Compare and contrast *Pride and Prejudice* and *The Financial Expert* as comic novels.
10. Discuss “Bliss” and “My Oedipus Complex” as stories that reflect the psychological problems that may arise within families.

Eng 104 (Intro to Drama)

11. Discuss Oedipus as an Aristotelian tragic hero.
12. Comment on the examples of the comic elements in love in *The Merchant of Venice* and *Arms and the Man*.
13. Compare and contrast the characters of Raina and Portia.
14. Discuss the last scene of *King Oedipus* in the light of Aristotle’s views on catharsis.
15. Both *King Oedipus* and *The Merchant of Venice* have a deep moral note.

Short Essay Questions

Eng 102

1. Discuss the following allusions in Eliot’s “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock”: a) John the Baptist, b) Prince Hamlet, c) Lazarus
2. What use of hyperbole and syllogistic reasoning does Donne make in “The Sun Rising”?
3. Discuss how Shakespeare reversed the Petrarchan convention of woman-worship in Sonnet 130, only to enhance the ironic effect.
4. How does Gray mediate on the death of ordinary country people and the vanity of human pretensions in his “Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard”?

5. An underlying message of the Sonnet “Shall I Compare thee...” is ‘Life is short, art is long.’ Do you agree?

Eng 103

6. Show how the relationship between money and marriage is brought out by Jane Austen in *Pride and Prejudice*
7. Comment on Mansfield’s use of point of view in “The Garden Party.”
8. Discuss “My Oedipus Complex” as a comic and ironic version of Freud’s theory about male children and their parents.
9. What picture of Indian society do you get from a reading of *The Financial Expert*?
10. Summarise E.M. Forster’s main arguments as they are presented in *Aspects of the Novel*.

Eng 104

11. Analyse and comment on the encounter between Teiresias and Oedipus in King Oedipus.
12. Discuss the role of Antonio in *The Merchant of Venice*.
13. Examine the reasons for Raina loving Bluntschli instead of Sergius by the end of the play *Arms and the Man*.
14. Discuss Aristotle’s analysis of plot and action in *Poetics*.
15. Compare the two characters of Raina and Louka, and discuss their roles in the play *Arms and the Man*.

Appendix 6: Analysis of literature topics on the basis of fields and subfields (Sample only)

6a Long Questions (Compare-Contrast)

Fields	Sub-field	Topic
Characterisation	Individual Characters (hero)	1.Discuss Oedipus as an Aristotelian tragic hero.
	Character relationship (lovers)	2. Show how the lover figures in Donne’s “The Sunne Rising” and Eliot’s “The love song of J. Alfred Prufrock” contrast in their attitudes toward their beloved.
Theme	Social human	1. Show how class relationships play an important role in fiction by referring to any two texts you have read. 2. Discuss the role of money in the plot of <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> and <i>The Financial Expert</i>
	Internal human	1.Compare any one of Shakespeare’s sonnets with Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s ‘How do I love Thee?’ in terms of their treatment of love. 2.Discuss “Bliss” and “My Oedipus Complex” as stories that reflect the psychological problems that may arise within families.
Literary genres/forms		1. Comment on the plots of <i>The Financial Expert</i> and <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> in the light of Forster’s views on the plot. 2. D.H. Lawrence calls the novel “The bright book of life.” Does your reading of <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> and <i>The Financial Expert</i> bear out his assertion about the novel?
Literary figures		1.Compare and contrast Adrienne Rich and Ted Hughes’ use of animal imagery in their poetry 2. Write an essay on the use of irony in fiction by referring to at least one short story and one novel that you have read.
Writers		1.Compare Shakespeare and Donne as love poets. Answer with reference to the poems in your syllabus. 2. Compare and contrast Jane Austen and R.K. Narayan as comic novelists.

Narrative technique		<p>1. Compare the use of dramatic monologue by Donne and Eliot, with reference to their poems in your syllabus.</p> <p>2. Compare and contrast “Shooting an elephant” and “My Oedipus Complex” as first person narratives.</p>

6b Short Questions

Fields	Sub-field	Topic
Characterisation	Individual Char.	1. Comment on Raina’s “the chocolate cream soldier”.
	Character relationship	2. Compare the two characters Oedipus and Teiresius, and discuss their roles in the play, <i>King Oedipus</i> .
Theme	Social human	<p>1. What commentaries on the human world do you find in Ted Hughes’s poems, “The Jaguar” and “Pike”?</p> <p>2. What is the significance of Belmont and Venice in <i>The Merchant of Venice</i></p>
	Internal human	<p>1. Much of the humour in “My Oedipus Complex” is created by portraying the adult world from the point of view of a young child. Discuss.</p> <p>2. What does Laura learn about life and death at the end of “The Garden Party”?</p> <p>3. Discuss how Dylan Thomas exploits feelings of nostalgia and pride in ‘Fern Hill’.</p>
Literary genres/forms		<p>1. Discuss John Donne’s “The Sun Rising” as a metaphysical poem.</p> <p>2. What according to Lawrence, are the main reasons for the importance of novel as a literary genre? To what extent do you find his views acceptable?</p>
Literary figures		<p>1. What use of hyperbole and syllogistic reasoning does Donne make in “The Sun Rising”?</p> <p>2. Discuss the following allusions in Eliot’s “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock”: a) John the Baptist, b) Prince Hamlet, c) Lazarus</p>
Writers		1. Evaluate Keats as a sonneteer on the basis of your reading of

		“On First Looking into Chapman’s Homer.”
Narrative technique		1.Comment on Mansfield’s use of point of view in “The Garden Party.” 2.Why does Forster characterise the “story-telling aspect” of the novel to be its “fundamental aspect”?

Appendix 7: Analysis of literature long essay topics' (all Compare-Contrast) on the basis of main rhetorical functions (sample)

Long Essay Topics (Contrast-Contrast)

Functions:

Evaluation:

1. Discuss the different ways Robert Herrick and Adrienne Rich look at women in their poems.
2. Eliot's "Prufrock" and Gray's "Country Churchyard" open with evocations of the evening and yet the two poems are very different in mood. Comment on the differences.

Position –Reason

1. Shakespeare in Sonnet 18, "Shall I Compare..." and Donne in the poem "The Sun Rising" are considered unconventional. Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer.
2. Both Portia and Raina are romantic heroines, but their attitude to life is very different. Do you agree?

Short Essay Topics

Functions:

Evaluation:

1. Discuss how Shakespeare reversed the Petrarchan convention of woman-worship in Sonnet 130, only to enhance the ironic effect.
2. How does Gray mediate on the death of ordinary country people and the vanity of human pretensions in his "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard"?

Position –Reason

1. Repression in life can be turned into fearless energy in art. Do you think this is a fit description of Adrienne Rich's "Aunt Jennifer's Tiger"? Discuss.
2. An underlying message of the Sonnet "Shall I Compare thee..." is 'Life is short, art is long.' Do you agree?

Description

1. Describe the role of trade and commerce in *The Merchant of Venice*
2. Summarise E.M. Forster's main arguments as they are presented in *Aspects of the Novel*.

Compare- Contrast

1. Who is the more pitiable character, Oedipus or Jocasta?
2. Sonnet 18 and 130 of Shakespeare are loosely described as love poems. Is it a fair description? Give reasons for your answer.

Appendix 8: Henry and Roseberry’s move analysis model

Move	Strategies
Introduction to the Topic (IT)	Make a general statement (58%) Give an example (10%) Give a general historical perspective (8%) Make a prediction (8%) Give a general definition (6%) Ask a general question (2%) Give a statistics (2%) Give a list (2%) Give a quote (2%)
Narrowing the Focus (NF)	Give specific facts, statistics, e.g., historical background, justification, classification, the next item in a set, or specific background information (55%) Explain /give reasons for the IT move (13%) Introduce a problem (7%) Contrast with the past by describing the present (4%) Predict /speculate about the future (4%) Ask a question about the IT move (2%) Choose an item from a set (2%) Answer a WH-question (2%) Make a related statement (2%) Give a description (2%) Give more general background information (2%) Give a general principle or an example (2%)
Stating the Central Idea (CI)	State a fact (including general and specific statements) (70%) State a problem (10%) State / referring to a solution to a problem (7.5%) Provide a Preview of the essay structure (5%) Ask a question (55%) Ask a question and providing an answer (2.5%) Describe a problem and a solution (2.5%) Give a definition (2.5%) Offer a historical perspective (2.5%)

Table 5.3: Henry and Roseberry’s (1997: 485) moves and strategies used in Introduction with the % of occurances in the texts

Move	Strategies
Commitment to Central Idea (CC)	Show a degree of Commitment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate (42%) State /reaffirm the Central Idea (13%) Other strategies are used less frequently <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State personal opinion /reaction to the Central Idea Make a prediction

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• State a solution to a problem mentioned in the Central Idea• Admonish• Show the consequences• Identify a greater benefit• Present a problem related to the Central Idea• List and evaluate techniques and solutions related to the problem stated in the Central Idea• Refine the Central Idea• Sum up and evaluate• Update the Central Idea
Expansion (EX)	<p>Evaluation</p> <p>Occurring only once or twice in the corpus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make a subjective evaluation plus reasons/ explanation• Identify greater problems• Analyse by narrating a personal response• Give consequences of the problem• Give reasoned support for the evaluation• Offer an alternative /make a suggestion• Evaluate the Central Idea move• List possible problems resulting from the Commitment to Central Idea move• Compare present problems with the results of a similar problem in the past• Give a historical perspective which explains the situation by contrasting it with the present prediction• Make a prediction• Show future directions

Table 5.4: Henry and Roseberry’s (1997: 492) moves and strategies used in Conclusion with the % of occurrences in the texts

Appendix 9: Sample of Initial Stage Text Analysis

Q: Evaluate “The Garden Party” as a short story discussing its strengths and weaknesses.

Ans: [Katherine Mansfield marks in modern English Literature individually as a short story writer. She wrote up of her deep and individual experiences. She developed a style of her own in writing short story which is unique in certain features.] **IGT**

[Katherine Mansfield’s style is very beautiful and compact as a short story writer. She is extremely economic in her approach to her theme and narrative.] **IGT** [“The Garden Party” is one of her most famous literary work. In this story, she has portrayed a young girl Laura living in the rich Sheridan family. There are certain characteristics in a short story including theme, plot, settings and characters.] **ICT**

[The theme of “The Garden Party” is very simple.] **SRCT** [All the descriptions were about the garden party and the death of the young man, Scott who left his wife and five children behind. Laura, who is the protagonist or the main character of the story, showed sympathy for the dead man because he lived in a cottage near her house. She tried to call of the party for this purpose. But her mother and sister were not interested to do so. So, they insisted on Laura and the party went on as planned. Meanwhile Laura’s brother came and when he showed sympathy for the dead man then her mother changed and asked Laura to send a basket to the neighbourhood. She went there and when came back in tears. When she met her brother on her way back she felt that life was marvellous.] **DE**

[Katherine Mansfield emphasized on the character and the incident in order to develop her plot.] **SRCT** [The death of the poor man is not the frame work of the story or the plot. It functions a catalyst in the plot. So we find from her stories that the focus is on the places or situations not on the plot or story.] **Ex CT**

[There is no plot in her stories instead she tries to define a situation.] **SRCT** [She writes about the people, characters, situations, not concentrating on plot. Thus her stories give the effect of overflowing their frames.] **Ex CT**

[Critics argue that the thesis of Katherine Mansfield’s work is that “Life is very wonderful, but not agreeable for the actors.” The special moment she takes from the existance of life is the moment of that realization. In her story, Laura, belonging to the affluent section of the society, confronted with a special situation and realizes that in spite of differences, ugliness, despite of poverty stricken life is marvellous and worth-leading.] **?? IM**

[Katherine Mansfield’s writings deals with deep psychological treatment. She takes same incidents of personal meeting or conversations to make the scene and atmosphere. In “The Garden Party”, she uses the incident of the death of the poor man in the neighbourhood in order to trace the development of Laura from adolescence to adulthood. Thus she achieves the identify of her own. All these are the strength of this story.]Ex &EvCT

[In spite of some limitations,] IM ?? Katherine Mansfield’s work is deemed as one of the great short story writers in modern English literature. Elizabeth Bowen in “An introduction to stories by Katherine Mansfield” writes that, “Her stories cover their tracks – they have an air of serene inevitability, almost as a touch of the miraculous.”] ??

[In the end we can say that in spite of some limitations]??, [“The Garden Party” is one of the greatest short stories in the annals of the modern short stories.] CCT

IGT	Introduction to General Topic
ICT	Introduction to Central Topic
SRCT	Statement Reiterating CT
Ev	Evidence
DE	Detail of Events
Ex	Explanation
ExCT	Explanation of CT
ExEvCT	Explanation & Evidence of CT
IM	Irrelevant Move
CCT	Confirming CT

Appendix 10: English language Description-Recount HGE

A Frightening Experience in your life

[[[Two younger brothers are under the knives of two monster like men; mother is tied tightly with the chair; another man is standing beside me with a sharp glittering knife touching my throat; the young boy, the servant of house is tied by two hand behind in the corner of the room and other three people are opening the drawers of the almirahs, wardrobes searching for valuable things and then taking them in their briefcase--- That is the most frightened site in my life which I can see even now before my eyes whenever I close them.]] P-ME

[[My father and older brother were out of the house. My mother, myself and my two younger brothers with the servant were at home. We had just taken lunch and mother was preparing to take a nap. The servant was cleaning the dining and I with my two brothers was watching TV. Right at that moment the calling bell rang. One of my brothers opened the door and found a gentleman. He was asking for an address. As my brother opened the door fully, more five men with that so called gentleman entered our house. They at once took out knives from different places of their body and placed them towards my brothers.] E [I was screaming with fear and tried to gather people and at that time another man placed another knife in my throat. I became silent as I felt that was the end of me.] PR [My mother being terrified rushed to this room and was held by another man. The servant was only left out. Another man held him too.] E [They were all big sized and were masked with black handkerchiefs.] D

[They then asked my mother to give the keys of the almirahs and other places. My mother didn't protest. We had a big amount of cash and gold ornaments. They handled them first. Then they started searching other valuable things. They made a mess of everything. Not only the valuable things, they also took the electronic items and even clothes.] E [I think they were the greediest people on the earth.] PR [They took ample time to search and pack. Each of the men were carrying briefcases. After packing everything they condemned us in one room and locked us from outside. My two little brothers were so frightened that they even forgot to cry.] E

[After they left the house I phoned my father and brother. They came at once and filed a case with the police. The police came and investigated and as is usual with Bangladeshi police, in the long run nothing happened. We did not recover our goods. The police suspected our security guard and took him on remand. All were hopeless. But my parents were happy with the fact that the robbers left us alive and did not harm us physically.] E]]

[[But they left a horrified scene before me and my brothers eyes. I believe this dangerous incident will always remind them of how risky life can get. This experience frightened me so much that I could not sleep for many nights. Our whole family was excessively cautious about strangers after this incident. This incident happened for the deteriorating condition of law and discipline. Any time in any man's life such incidents can happen.]] RP-PR

Appendix 11: English language Description-Recount LGE

My favourite Teacher

[[[My favourite teacher is Mr Abdul Hakim. He is my college-teacher. He took our English class.] P-PR [There are some English teacher in our college.] O-BI [But all of them Mr Abdul Hakim is my favourite teacher.] P-PR [There are many reasons.]]] PD [[[He taught our lessons very friendly. He was also amiable. He was very serious about our lessons and our development. He taught us in a such way that we understood his lectures very easily. It also helped us to understood our lessons. Sometimes he told us short moral stories. It gave us important lessons about our practised life. It also helped us to face the difficulties of our life.

When he took his class he was very attentive in the classroom. We were also attentive in his class. He didnt like inattentive students. He said that attention is the pre-condition of a good result.

He didnt like the people who tell lies. He always says "To tell a lie is a great sin. Never tell a lie".

In the classroom he was our friend. He spoke with us like a friend. So there was no restriction to understanding our lessons.

He liked the students who were regular in class. He said that regularity is the pre-condition of a good student.

He advised us to read other books. He said us text books are not sufficient to acquire knowledge.

He took care of our result.]] D [[[He is my favourite teacher. I will never forget him.]]] RP-PR

Appendix 12: English Language Exposition-Discussion HGE

**Q. How is your generation different from your parents' and grandparents' generation?
Does the generation gap create problems for you?**

[[[" But mother, I will not be late, can I go , please?" My mother gave me a stern cold look saying that it is the last time she would allow me to go out for a long drive, I sometimes wonder if I am the only miserable child in this world who has to fight with her parents every now and then to convince them that she only wants to have a good time with her friends.] **O-G** [Sadly enough, the number of the wretched children is a lot more than just a few. The scenario was even worse in my parents' time when the children were not even allowed to leave the neighbourhood.] **NTP** [However, things have changed over the years and it is about time that parents changed over the years and it is about time that parents should know how they unwillingly cause their children to suffer by being too authoritative.]]] **P-ST**

[A friend of mine used to sneak out from her house since her parents never allowed her to leave home. They were extremely commanding and never allowed her to go anywhere without them. She fell into bad company and got addicted to drugs. Her parents were furious and sent her to a rehabilitation centre.] **ESP-EvEx** [Parents who are overprotective, unwillingly ruin the lives of their children when their best intention is to give them a better future.] **SP**

[Few children have the courage to open up to their parents.] **SP** [They fear of being admonished and thus keep things away from them. They hide the fact that they are getting poor grades at school and even if they are going through some emotional turmoil. Little do they know that for this mere fear of approaching their parents, they will have to pay an exorbitant price in the future.] **ESP-EvEx**

[Parents usually complain that life has so much to offer to their children yet they always complain and that they themselves were never given the privilege that children these days do. They say how they were never allowed to step outside the house or even to a relative's place without accompanying their parents. Free mixing of the sexes was imaginable and parents used to t....?? out their children if they found them having a relationship. However, the scenario has changed completely as the children these days want to confide in their parents to make them understand in order to make their lives better. However, parents are completely preoccupied with the idea that they have seen the world and knows better and in some cases they would not even let their children speak. This not only widens the generation gap but also causes the children to think that their parents are not concerned about their welfare.] **ESP-EvEx**

[[[It is hard to keep a smooth relationship with one's parents.] **RP-CP** [However, one should never stop trying as it makes life a lot more easier. Parents should not only be understanding but should also give the children an opportunity to know the world. Generation gap is a universal problem and it can only be reduced if both sides learn to be co-operative.]]] **BP-MS**

Appendix 13: English language Exposition-Discussion LGE

**Q. How is your generation different from your parents' and grandparents' generation?
Does the generation gap create problems for you?**

[[[At present, everything is changing so rapidly. So many new things are coming to our life.] **O-GS** [The young generation are happy to get these modern things. But the old generation are not in a welcome mode to these things.] **P-ST** [They are little bit unhappy and disappointed to have all these modern things which, they think break down the old customs and menners.] **EP** [So, by the course of rapid changing, the generation gap is increasing and creating many problems.] **]] O-GS**

[[[The change of thinking is a major different between our generation and our parents and grandparents generation.] **SP** [The people of young generation is trying to bring some break in the old tradition. They want to wear modern dress. They are more adventurer than the old generation. They are sometime too much generouse in man, woman relation. But the old generation think all these things will gradually lead the society to a imbalance situation. The change of thinking regarding dress and tradition is not accepted by them.] **ESP-EvEx**

[There are also a big gap in chosing occupation between the old and young generation.] **SP** [The old generation are very much engaged to keep their parents occupation for most of time. They are not too much ambitious in chosing a new occupation. But the people of young generation are very much ambitious. They try to break the concept of old generation. They are liberal in chosing their occupation.] **ESP-EvEx**

[It is a common seen that the old people always give importance in family life.] **SP** [The people of our parents and grandparents generation are always in a hope that the family bond will be more strengthening. But the people of our generation have a different thinking about family life. They want to have a single family while the old people want to have a big family. The young people, now a days are not hesitate to marry a girl in any rank of society while the old people try to keep their family status.] **ESP-EvEx** [Thus the gap between old and new generation is also increasing.] **SP**

[There are also a gap between old and young generation] **SP** [in accepting western civilization. The people of old generation are not wanted western civilization rather they hate it very much. But the young people are always in a mode of accept everything which is available in western civilization.] **]] ESP-EvEx**

[[[The generation gap between old and young generation is increasing very rapidly.] **RP-CP** [It is not wanted.] **BP-PR** [The old people should be more generouse and at the same time the young people need to have some respect for their parents and grandparents generation. Thus the gap between old and new generation should break down.] **]]BP-MS**

Appendix 14:English Literature Exposition-Discussion HGE

Q. Identify the conflict between Larry and his father and comment on its resolution.

Ans . [[["Story telling doesn't deal with problems; it doesn't have any solutions to offer ; it just states the human condition," says Frank O' Connor himself.] **O-G** [In his largely autobiographical short story "My Oedipus Complex", Connor depicts the Oedipal problem faced by Larry Deleaney after his father returns home from the war.]] **P-ST**

[[[In this story, Connor made a humorous use of the twentieth century Austrian psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud's theory of the Oedipus Complex] **SP** [which stated that every male child at an age of about four or five undergoes through a phase in which he would compete with his own father over his mother's possession and would have his father dearly removed from the mother's life. In normal children, this Oedipal conflict would resolve as the children would reach maturity while in abnormal children, the conflict continued.] **ESP-Ex**

[This conflict was applicable to the five year old Larry.] **SP** [He lived an uncomplicated, idyllic existence before the father returned home.] **ESP-Ex** [He was an imaginative (the conversation with "Mrs Right" and "Mrs Left") and also a precocious child who had unconsciously come to assume the role of the only man in the house (he often went with his mother to the post office to collect "pennies" which he would not have done in father's presence). Ironically, he described the war as "the most peaceful period of my (his) life." At this point, he was both the son – the only child and also the "sun"- the centre of his mother's universe. The father was like a novelty whom he only knew from his "Santa Claus" manner of coming in and leaving the house.] **ESP- EvEx**

[Enter father - and Larry's whole world seemed to shatter apart. Until now, he never saw much of father whom he now naturally considered as "the total stranger who had cajoled his way back from the war "into mother's big bed. He faced the problem of sharing his mother with this man coming out of the blue into Larry's life suddenly. He developed jealousy for Mick.] **ESP-EvEx** [This is how Larry was made familiar with his Oedipal conflict.] **SP**

[However, we assume that Larry was not alone in his resentment of his father because the latter would also try to steal away the time his wife devoted to Larry. The two would engage in a series of skirmish trying to compete for mother's attention. He would for instance ask for his boots while mother would give her time to Larry. In the process, ironically mother would suffer the most adversely. The use of terms such as "principal rights and privileges" which Larry set out to regain and "early morning conferences" gave the story its hilarious touch apart from the use of irony.] **ESP-ExEv**

[When Larry realised that father seemed to have a "terrible hold" on mother and it all depended on "giving people rings" he talked of marrying his mother when he would grow up and have "lots of babies" which only attracted a smile from her and a great guffaw from father. To child Larry, this was the only way to regain complete possession of the love of his life - mother.] **ESP-ExEv**

[He even tried to imitate father by making noise at tea, dribbling his pipe and making up bits of pieces of news of his own all of which showed the child's desperate attempt to win back mother. He realized in every aspect he was less winning than him (father). The result was to being called disgusting by mother and getting scowl from father.] **ESP- ExEv**

[The father-son conflict would have gone endlessly, if it was not for the birth of a second child Sonny.] **SP** [The birth of Sonny brilliantly contributed to the unraveling or

denouement of the plot. Now, the mother had time neither for father nor for Larry. Instead all her time was taken up by the “poisonous pup” Sonny who “had never anything up with him” and “only cried for attention” according to Larry. So, instead of hating each other, Sonny now became presumably the object of mutual jealousy of the father and son.] **ESP- ExEv**

[When one day, Larry commented “if another bloody baby comes into this house, I’m going out” a common link was established between the father and son. Both were now fellow sufferers and sought solace in each other. So, one day when the father escaped into Larry’s room, trying to avoid a wife soothing a screaming baby, the link- the bridge of reconciliation- between them is finally sealed. Larry knew his father had seen through same and that he himself “saw through” father now as well. Although both of them did not apologise for their previously antagonistic behaviour, there was a hint that from now on, their relationship would develop positively.] **ESP- ExEv**

[Thus, Larry became prepared to settle for his father when he knew there was no more chance for him to regain his position as the centre of mother’s universe- her attention.] **SP** [Therefore, to Larry, he was “very bony” but still “better than nothing”.]] **ESP- ExEv**

[[[Thus, in this way Connor brilliantly depicts the resolution of the story in his own humorous way and essentially saves the story from becoming a tragedy.] **RP-CI** [He keenly enters a child’s mind to reveal his psychological ongoings and makes a perceptive use of Freud’s theory to give it a comic aspect in “My Oedipus Complex” altogether.]] **RP-CP**

Appendix 15: English literature Exposition-Discussion LGE

Q. Write an essay on the character of Bluntschli in “Arms and the Man.”

Ans. [[[George Bernard Shaw is a dramatist who used his play as an instrument to criticise the social norms and in consciousness.] **O-BI** [A writer conveys his ideology or conception through the character.] **NTP**

[George Bernard Shaw, according to some critics is considered next to Shakespeare. He is fully liable to perform social responsibilities. It should be noted that though he has written a lot of dramas, his all dramas are comedies.] **O-BI** [In “Arms and the Man” we see Bluntschli as an intentional creation of the play wright.] **]] P-ST** [[[We first see the presence of Bluntschli in the bed chamber of Raina, the heroine of the play. He was fighting on the side of Serb. But unfortunately he had to flee away from the battle fields. As enemy soldier chased him he took shelter in Raina’s room dramatically.

One night Raina was enjoying the beauty of a moonlit night. She was in a dreamy mood. Then her mother, Mrs Catherine Petkoff came and told her to sleep. At this moment Louka the maid servant of Petkoff house told them that the Bulgarian Armies are chasing Serb Armies and they began to flee. So there may be a fight in the street. So Louka warned to stop the shutters of window. So Raina blots shutters of window and is about to sleep. When she hears the quick breathing of some in the room. She jumped on the bed and asked who is was Bluntschli threatened her with pistol and told her not to shout. If she shouts then he will kill her.

Bluntschli told Raina he is a soldier fighting on the side of Serb. He has fled away from battle field. And the enemy soldier are chasing them. He told her that if the enemy soldier can catch him then they will kill him. At this point Bluntschli took the cloak of Raina, who was in her nightgown. He told her that this is best weapon. He says “This best weapon than revolver:eh:” Then enemy soldier came to search the fugitive soldier. So Bluntschli gave the cloak to Raina so that she doesn’t feel shame in front of the Russian Army. Being acquainted with the personality of Bluntschli Raina became sympathetic to him. So she told the searner soldier that there is no fugitive soldier in the house.

Bluntschli thanked Raina for saving his life. He told Raina to give him some food as he was hungry. He wanted some chocolates and informed Raina that he carries chocolates in stead of cartdiges in the battle field. Raina the romantic girl who thought that soldiers are supermen learned from Bluntschli that the soldier are like ordinary men, subject to same weaknesses. Being kind to Bluntschli she gave him chocolates and called him “chocolate cream soldier.” She went to her mother to inform the matter. Her mother came with her in the room and they surprised to see that he fell asleep. They let him sleep.

Next morning they helped him to escape. They gave him a coat to flee away. The coat was Raina’s father Major Petkoff. Raina indulged a weakness to him. She put a photograph in pocket of the coat. On the photograph she wrote the following words- “A photograph to her chocolate cream soldier. A souvenir.” **] ESP-Ev**

[By these words we may concept that she has begun to love him.] **Ex** [The war was over. Bulgarians Armies won the war for the bravery cavalry of Sergius, the romantic fool of the play and fiancé of Raina. After war Bluntschli came to return the coat. At this moment Major Petkoff wanted the coat as he was feeling uneasy. Bluntschli gave coat to Raina's mother. She felt embarrasses.

She tried so that the matter goes unnoticed to Major petkoff. But Major Petkoff saw him and invited him in his house.] **ESP-Ev** [Through the character of Bluntschli showed us the realistic view about love, war and marriage. Generally we think soldier as uncommon but George Bernard Shaw proved hollowness of romanticism.] **SP**

Bluntschli proved that there is no existence of eternal love. As Raina was engaged to Sergius but when he was flirting with Louka, Raina saw it. So then changes her mind. As Raina was the follower of higher love she was untouched and soft, tender. So Bluntschli thought that she was girl of seventeen.] **ESP- Ex**

[But when he knew that she is a girl of 23 he proposed her parents for her hand to marry. Raina's parents surprised but they knew that Sergius is no longer in love with Raina, and he flirts with Louka, so they gave consent to Bluntschli as he is a son of wealthy parents.] **]] ESP-Ev** [[At the end of play we can say George Bernard Shaw has shown his artistic skill by sketching the character of Bluntschli as hero of the play.]] **RP-CP**

Appendix 16: Students' Pre-Interview Questionnaire

STUDENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS ON WRITING EXPERIENCES

Please answer the following questions. You do not need to copy the questions. Simply write down the question number and give your responses on the sheets provided (the responses do not have to be very long).

This feedback will be used for research purposes.

1. Do you like writing? Why?
2. Do you think writing is an important skill to develop? Why or why not?
3. Are your writing tasks now similar/dissimilar from what you did in your SSC and HSC? How?
4. What kind of writing do you do for your English language and literature courses?
5. Are you made to write essays in class? When (language class/literature class/tutorial class)?
6. When answering a question, do you notice the instructional verbs (like, *discuss/ explain/ define/analyse*)? What difference do they make, if any, to the way you write?
7. Which do you prefer, writing language or literature essays? Why?
8. What relationship do you perceive between language and literature essays? How are they similar and how are they different?
9. Do you feel you learnt to write better essays from the language classes?
10. For you personally what is the most difficult thing about writing?
11. What are your views about writing literature essays?
12. In your view, what are the reasons you are asked to write essays?
13. Do you find it easy to know what your teacher wants when s/he sets an essay?
14. Are you aware of the writing 'rules' or the assessment criteria based on which you which you will be judged in your language and literature essay?
15. When you begin writing on a topic, do you use an outline of main points that you are going to elaborate on later?
16. During your HSC how were you taught to write a paragraph or structure an essay?
Could you please say what you remember about topic sentences, supporting details and concluding sentences?
17. Do you make revisions to your corrected essays?

*Thank you for your participation.
Nevin Farida*

Appendix 17: Teacher Interview Questions

- *These questions aim to get information about what First Year Students of the English Department, Dhaka University write*

1. What is valued in a) Language essay and b) Literature essay?
2. In what ways are the language and literature essays similar and dissimilar?
3. What are the stylistic features of a) Language essay and b) Literature essay? Are these practiced in reality?
4. What do you think of the topics that we give our students to write essays on a) Language and b) Literature?
5. Do you think the instructional verbs/ question wordings can have important functions in students writing better/well constructed essays?
6. What do you think are students' main writing problems? Why do you think these occur?
7. When you are marking an essay, what are the factors you put most emphasis on?
8. Why did you give this grade to this essay? *(on showing his/her corrected and marked essay)*

Appendix 18: Teacher Interview Follow up Questions

The FC verses E 101

1. FC-2 has been replaced by E 101, why?
2. What do you think is the purpose of E101 language course?
3. How is E101 different or similar from FC 2?

Relationship between E101 and literature course writing

4. Are students benefiting from the language course (particularly in their tasks)? How?
5. Can students make a connection between the language course essay writing and the essays they write for literature courses? Why/ why not?
6. Do you think the information and skills provided in the language class by the teachers are useful which students could transfer to their literature writing?

Timed Exam situations (pl refer to both lit. & lang. essays)

7. During timed exam situations what different things do teachers value in students' writing?
8. Do teachers expect quotations during timed exams in students' essay scripts?

Type of topics

9. What type of topics (in both lang. and lit.) should students be encouraged to write more to develop their literature essay writing abilities?
10. Do you find mismatches between the task (topic of the essay) and the content (essay/answers) when you are checking an essay? If you do, what sort of mismatches are they?
11. If you find mismatches between the task (topic of the essay) and the content (essay/ answers) what do you do when you mark it?

Generic Structure of Lang. & Lit. essays (Pl. answer separately for lang. & lit.)

12. What do you value in terms of style and organization and content, in the Introduction, Body and Conclusion of 1) lang. essays, 2) lit. essay?
13. How do students in reality construct the Introduction, Body and Conclusion of 1) lang. essays, 2) lit. essay?

Appendix 19: Teacher Interview Guide

I. Aim to investigate essay topics:

Q1. What is your opinion about selecting the words when you are setting a question for your students?

Q2. What do you give emphasis to when setting a question---instructional verbs (like...) or the topic or something else?

Q3. Do you think students at all try to answer questions on the basis of the instructional verbs used?

Q4. Do you think the instructional verbs matter at all in a literature question?

Q5. What do you think of the lang. essay questions/ topics?

Q6. What type of essays/topics are students made to write for the lang. class? How are they different from the lit topics? What do you think about that?

II. Aim to explore essays' (Lang. & Lit.) generic structure, content organisation and lang:

Q1. What do you think when students start an essay by giving a short background of the author even if it not required?

Q2. How can a literature essay be different from a lang. essay?

Q3. In terms of structure and organisational pattern, what do you look for in an essay?

Q4. Do you think/how do you think structure is important in an essay?

Q5. How much is structure important in relation to content of the essay?

Q6. What should an Introduction, a Body and Conclusion have in an essay (within our context)?

Q7. Where do students mainly have problems in?

Q8. Have you noticed difficulties with students in the following areas:

- a) selecting content
- b) organising content
- c) understanding the different parts of the essay
- d) difficulties with developing coherent ideas & arguments
- e) difficulties in maintaining linkage between ideas

III. Aim to find out how the lang. & lit. essays are compatible with each other:

Q1. In what ways can learning to write a language essay help students write a literature essay?

Q2. In what ways are the literature and language essays similar and dissimilar?

Q3. Which essays, lit.or lang, do students find most difficult to write and why?

IV. Aim to find out the values teachers have and the values in practice of writing lit. and lang. essays:

Q1. a) How would you like to define a lang essay and a lit. essay?

b) Do you think these are practiced by students?

Q2. What do you, as a teacher, value more in an essay:

- lang
- content
- organisation
- structure & body
- linkage
- grammar
- development of ideas
- word choice
- writer's voice
- personal voice, 'I'/position of writer

Q3. Do you expect the student's personal voice to be expressed?

Q4. What qualities are considered important for good writing?

Q5. Do you think there are disciplinary variations/differences between a lang essay and a lit essay?

Q6. What do you look for when marking an essay?

Q7. Why did you give this grade in the essay?

Appendix 20: Student Interview 1 (Initial labelling)

L #	I/S	Text	Comment
019	I	...	
020		What do you think...I mean... were you given scope	
021		to use this skill before, like in your school days,	
022		college days? How much time did you spend on	
023		writing? Was it encouraged in class?	
024	S1	No, it wasn't and it is unfortunate that it wasn't	<u>Past writing</u> ²⁷
025		encouraged too much in school or college...uh...and	
026		so I couldn't get the opportunity to write, in school	Past: Problematic ²⁸
027		and college.	
028			-Writing not encouraged in schools and
029	I	Why do you think this happened? Why do you think	colleges.
030		you didn't get an opportunity?	
031			
032	S1	I think this is the system...this because of the system	
033		of our education.	
034			
035	I	They dont emphasise...	
036			
037	S1	No	
038			
039	I	...on writing. What is given more emphasis?	*Memorisation ²⁹
040			- More emphasis is given on reading,
041	S1	They give more emphasis on reading, basically on	basically memorizing
042		memorising.	- S1 unhappy with edu system/teachers
043			
...		...	
072	I	So what about 1st year? What did you feel when	
073		you were asked to write in the 1st year because you	
074		said that ...uh..in your college years you were not	
075		that much encouraged to write, so, how did you	
076		manage your writing at the university in the 1st	
077		year? Do you remember anything?	
078			<u>Present Problems of University Writing</u>
079	S1	I faced many a problems... uh...like...uh...in the 1st	
080		year in the FC2 classes when teachers asked us to	Prob in 1 st Year:
081		write something on different, some particular	
082		topics...we...uh...I can remember of myself that I	
083		faced many a problems like I have to ...uh...I had to	-fluency prob, hesitated to write because
084		hesitate...what should I write, what should I not	of L1 backgraound
085		write, how I should manage...uh...how should ...I	-gr. Not prob
			-Lack of confidence

²⁷ Preconceived categories

²⁸ Emerging categories

²⁹ Surprises

086	never thought of grammatical mistakes because I	
087	was enough good enough in grammar but I was	
088	quite...I felt it difficult, quite difficult to write in	
089	English in the FC classes fluently because I was	
090	from Bengali medium, not from English medium so	
091	I felt it quite difficult.	
092		
093	I: And like you said, you were from Bengali medium,	
094	that's one thing....did you do ..some writing on	
095	literature pieces because here you are doing a lot of	
096	writing on literary texts	
097		
098	S1: Yes	
099		
100	I: In your school, college were you given any	<u>Past writing: Prob</u>
101	assignments or topics to write on any literary texts?	
102		
103	S1: No	-No lit writing
104		- Wrote only para, ques-ans,
105	I: What did you write on? I mean, the little writing you	comprehension, summary of passages
106	did or memorised were on what sort of topics in	- non fictional writing
107	your college and school?	
108		
109	S1: We used to write actually paragraphs, essays,	
110	question-answer, comprehension, that's all.	
...	...	
161	I: So how did you manage to write for your lit.	
162	courses?	<u>University Writing for literature</u>
163		
164	S1: I think it's my own creativity power and imagination	How S managed to write for Lit.?
165	that has helped me a lot in my literature classes.	- own creative power & imagination
166		- need more writing for lit classes
167	I: Does that work for all students?	- all Ss don't have the creative
168		power
169	S1: No i dont think so because i think we need more	
170	writing and writing classes and ...uh... that is not	
171	only language writing...that ...it should emphasise	
172	...uh...our literary texts, our literary skills. Our	
173	literary skills should be developed more.	
...	...	<u>Difference bet. Language & lit writing</u>
205	I: So what difference do you basically see as the	**Lang classes show how to Develop
206	difference in writing in the language class and lit	
207	class? Are there any differences that you	S feels lang writing helps improve the
208	experienced?	lang, use correct lang. This will be useful
...	...	for lit writing
217	S1: ...Not too much difference because the mainstream	
218	classes are much linked with the FC classes, with	
219	the lang. classes. The lang. classes are...uh...tells us,	

220 shows us the ways how to develop our skills on
 221 English and it helps us to write Eng. more, in more
 222 improved way, in more...correct way. I think that it
 223 will help us in future to write correct Eng. or to
 224 write imaginative lang., literary, uh figurative lang.

...

239 S1: In my FC classes I don't have to. I mustn't have to
 240 think more, much on a particular topic. I'm given a
 241 topic to write on, like an essay, i'm given to write or
 242 paragraph, I'm given to write on. But in lit. classes I
 243 have to read a poem or read a text and think on it,
 244 think over it and then I have to make notes. I have to
 245 answer a question. I have to answer a question in the
 246 tutorial class on an unknown topic.

248 I: So you think one is more demanding than the other?

250 S1: Yes

252 I: Which one is more demanding?

254 S1: Ofcourse the mainstream class or the lit. class. But
 255 still the FC course should exist because it helps us
 256 improve our lang., helps us to think on how we can
 257 improve our Eng., our thinking style.

...

262 S1: I just want to add one more thing, our FC classes
 263 give us a new direction, how to ...think on new
 264 topics, new ideas. Many new topics are added in the
 265 FC book and it is just like a boon , it is boon for us.
 266 It helps us to write an essay more broadly and in a
 267 more improved way and I haven't written an essay
 268 like that in the school and college...uh...just I have
 269 learnt it from the university classes

271 S1: Even simple general topic essays were not done in
 272 your SSC/HSC levels?

274 I: Yes, simple essays were given

276 S1: Very simple ones.

278 I: Yes but the style was not improved.

280 S1: You were not explicitly taught or told what to write.

282 I: no how to write a topic sentence, how to write a
 283 thesis, how I should write an improved essay, how I
 284 would be able to get the maximum marks, how to

University Lang Writing:

Don't have to think much

University Lit writing

-** Read the text, think , understand,
 make notes, then prepare & then answer a
 lit ques

Benefit of Lang course

** S emphasizes the importance of lang
 course. It certainly helps.

- lang classes help Ss to think on
new topics and ideas
- can write in improved way
- [Teaches the technique; esp for
L1 background Ss this course is
useful]
- Past no learning
- Essay writing was taught at Uni

*[This S comes from one of the best
schools]*

Past writing: Prob

Struc of essay never taught

285write the paragraphs, how to write the essays in a ...
...
300S1: I think an essay should be written on your own. I
301think I should not write in a memorized way, from a
302book or a journal. I should write myself

...
...

Memorisation
- S1 doesn't like memorizing essays

Appendix 21: Student Interview 1 (Final categorisation)

L #	I/S	Text	Comment
019	I	...	
020		What do you think...I mean... were you given scope	
021		to use this skill before, like in your school days,	
022		college days? How much time did you spend on	
023		writing? Was it encouraged in class?	
024	S1	No, it wasn't and it is unfortunate that it wasn't	Writing experiences in Pre-university contexts ³⁰
025		encouraged too much in school or college...uh...and	
026		so I couldn't get the opportunity to write, in school	
027		and college.	<u>Lack of instruction in the past³¹</u>
028			
029	I	Why do you think this happened? Why do you think	-Writing not encouraged in schools and
030		you didn't get an opportunity?	colleges.
031			
032	S1	I think this is the system...this because of the system	* <u>Role of rote learning</u> * ³²
033		of our education.	- More emphasis is given on reading,
034			basically memorizing
035	I	They dont emphasise...	
036			
037	S1	No	
038			
039	I	...on writing. What is given more emphasis?	
040			
041	S1	They give more emphasis on reading, basically on	
042		memorising.	
043			
...		...	
072	I	So what about 1st year? What did you feel when	
073		you were asked to write in the 1st year because you	
074		said that ...uh..in your college years you were not	
075		that much encouraged to write, so, how did you	
076		manage your writing at the university in the 1st	
077		year? Do you remember anything?	
078			
079	S1	I faced many a problems... uh...like...uh...in the 1st	
080		year in the FC2 classes when teachers asked us to	
081		write something on different, some particular	
082		topics...we...uh...I can remember of myself that I	
083		faced many a problems like I have to ...uh...I had to	
084		hesitate...what should I write, what should I not	
085		write, how I should manage...uh...how should ...I	

³⁰ Preconceived categories

³¹ Emerging categories

³² Surprises

086	never thought of grammatical mistakes because I	
087	was enough good enough in grammar but I was	
088	quite...I felt it difficult, quite difficult to write in	Writing experiences in university
089	English in the FC classes fluently because I was	contexts
090	from Bengali medium, not from English medium so	
091	I felt it quite difficult.	Prob in 1 st Year:
092		
093	I: And like you said, you were from Bengali medium,	-hesitant to write
094	that's one thing....did you do ..some writing on	
095	literature pieces because here you are doing a lot of	
096	writing on literary texts	-Lack of confidence (L1 background)
097		
098	S1: Yes	
099		
100	I: In your school, college were you given any	
101	assignments or topics to write on any literary texts?	
102		
103	S1: No	
104		
105	I: What did you write on? I mean, the little writing you	
106	did or memorised were on what sort of topics in	
107	your college and school?	
108		Writing experiences in Pre-university
109	S1: We used to write actually paragraphs, essays,	contexts
110	question-answer, comprehension, that's all.	
...	...	Past: Prob
161	I: So how did you manage to write for your lit.	-No lit writing
162	courses?	- writing tasks simpler
163		
164	S1: I think it's my own creativity power and imagination	
165	that has helped me a lot in my literature classes.	
166		University Writing for literature
167	I: Does that work for all students?	
168		<u>Role of creativity</u>
169	S1: No i dont think so because i think we need more	
170	writing and writing classes and ...uh... that is not	- S1' creative power helps in her
171	only language writing...that ...it should emphasise	writing for lit classes
172	...uh...our literary texts, our literary skills. Our	
173	literary skills should be developed more.	- all Ss don't have the creative
...	...	power
205	I: So what difference do you basically see as the	
206	difference in writing in the language class and lit	
207	class? Are there any differences that you	
208	experienced?	
...	...	
217	S1: ...Not too much difference because the mainstream	<u>R.ship bet. Language & lit writing</u>
218	classes are much linked with the FC classes, with	

219	the lang. classes. The lang. classes are...uh...tells us,	**Lang classes show how to Develop
220	shows us the ways how to develop our skills on	
221	English and it helps us to write Eng. more, in more	S feels lang writing helps improve the
222	improved way, in more...correct way. I think that it	lang, use correct lang. This will be useful
223	will help us in future to write correct Eng. or to	for lit writing
224	write imaginative lang., literary, uh figurative lang.	
...		
239	S1: In my FC classes I don't have to. I mustn't have to	<u>University Lang Writing:</u>
240	think more, much on a particular topic. I'm given a	
241	topic to write on, like an essay, i'm given to write or	Simple process
242	paragraph, I'm given to write on. But in lit. classes I	Cognitively less demanding
243	have to read a poem or read a text and think on it,	
244	think over it and then I have to make notes. I have to	
245	answer a question. I have to answer a question in the	
246	tutorial class on an unknown topic.	
247		
248	I: So you think one is more demanding than the other?	
249		
250	S1: Yes	
251		
252	I: Which one is more demanding?	
253		
254	S1: Ofcourse the mainstream class or the lit. class. But	<u>University Lit writing</u>
255	still the FC course should exist because it helps us	
256	improve our lang., helps us to think on how we can	Complex process
257	improve our Eng., our thinking style.	-Cognitively more demanding
...	...	
262	S1: I just want to add one more thing, our FC classes	<u>Role of Lang course</u>
263	give us a new direction, how to ...think on new	
264	topics, new ideas. Many new topics are added in the	beneficial
265	FC book and it is just like a boon , it is boon for us.	
266	It helps us to write an essay more broadly and in a	
267	more improved way and I haven't written an essay	<u>Pre-university writing experience</u>
268	like that in the school and college...uh...just I have	
269	learnt it from the university classes	<u>Lack of instruction on Struc of essay</u>
270		
271	I: Even simple general topic essays were not done in	
272	your SSC/HSC levels?	
273		
274	S1: Yes, simple essays were given	
275		
276	I: Very simple ones.	
277		
278	S1: Yes but the style was not improved.	
279		
280	I: You were not explicitly taught or told what to write.	
281		
282	S1 no how to write a topic sentence, how to write a	
283	thesis, how I should write an improved essay, how I	

284	would be able to get the maximum marks, how to	
285	write the paragraphs, how to write the essays in a ...	<u>*Memorisation*</u>
...	...	
300	S1: I think an essay should be written on your own. I	Detrimental effect
301	think I should not write in a memorized way, from a	
302	book or a journal. I should write myself	
...	...	